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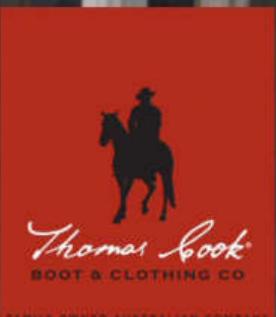
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AS THIS ISSUE WENT TO PRESS I MADE A QUICK TRIP TO CENTRAL-WESTERN QUEENSLAND FOR FAMILY REASONS.

The flight from Brisbane to Longreach turned out to be a bit of a reality check as the view from the plane was a sobering reminder about the sorry situation the country I love so dearly is in. The fact is that all but the coastal fringe Queensland is in severe drought and many areas are in their third consecutive year of drastically reduced rainfall. The story is repeated across vast swathes of Australia, in particular in northern NSW, western Victoria and south-eastern South Australia, and the truth is, that even if it bucketed down tomorrow in every place that needs it, it will be many years before the bush recovers from the impact of these bad seasons. It takes time for the land to restore, for herds to be rebuilt and for the loans taken to cover the costs of getting by to be repaid. And the longer the drought lasts, the longer it will take until people living in the drought-affected parts get back on track.

As a city dweller, it's easy to feel helpless in the face of such natural disasters. While organisations such as Baked Relief (bakedrelief.org) and Buy a Bale (buyabale.com.au) do wonderful work and offer much-appreciated moral support to drought-affected farmers, the fact remains that it's not just the farms that are suffering, it's all the businesses in the towns and communities that support them as well. Shopkeeper, farmer, tourism venue operator, hotelier ... the main thing they all need at this time is money in order to survive and eventually rebuild. And that's where city folk can make a real difference, by taking holidays in remote and regional Australia, shopping in their shops, visiting their produce and farmers' markets, staying in their accommodation venues and dining in their cafés and restaurants. Along the way you'll be guaranteed a rich and rewarding experience, see some spectacularly beautiful countryside (not to mention amazing night skies, sunrises and sunsets), and have the chance to see first-hand how our country cousins live and the work that goes into producing our food and fibre.

In each issue of *Australian Country* we endeavour to provide a snapshot of our diverse land and the people who call it home. This issue is no exception as we travel from a retreat in the hinterland of Queensland's Sunshine Coast and an artist's hideaway in South Australia to a lighthouse keeper's cottage on Victoria's Great Ocean Road, and the stylishly Boho home of a homewares importer in Western Australia. Our travel feature ventures across the ditch to New Zealand's Central Otago district and we also take in a garden, which is open in spring in the Victorian Goldfields. So I urge you, please, to take these pages as your inspiration and start planning that short break or grand tour in the Australian country. I hope you enjoy this issue as much as we have preparing it, and I look forward to seeing you in *Australian Country* 18.8, which goes on sale October 29.



KIRSTY MCKENZIE, EDITOR
KMCKENZIE@UNIVERSALMAGAZINES.COM.AU



Cover photo by ANASTASIA KARIOFYLLIDIS

HELPING OUT ON THIS ISSUE ARE ...



BRONTE CAMILLERI
STYLIST & LOCATION SCOUT

Bronte's career began in visual merchandising for major Australian retailers, including R. M. Williams, Myer and Cue. She has been a lecturer on the subject for the tertiary education system. She has worked as overall coordinator on a range of projects from small studio proping to photo shoots for international corporations.



ROSS WILLIAMS
PHOTOGRAPHER

Ross has been a photographer for 30 years, shooting food, wine and commercial and residential architecture, as well as travelling overseas to shoot everything from mining projects to aircraft. He relishes the challenge of arriving at a previously unseen location and working on the best way to showcase it.



ANASTASIA KARIOFYLLIDIS
PHOTOGRAPHER

Anastasia has been capturing an array of images from interiors to still life, architecture, gardens, landscapes, food and travel for more than a decade. She is based on the Sunshine Coast and has recently photographed the book, *The Thoughtful Home*, published by New Holland, working with author and stylist, Tahn Scoon.



DON FUCHS
PHOTOJOURNALIST

German-born Don has been semi-nomadic for more than 35 years. Driven by curiosity and the need to know what's around the corner, he explores the globe professionally and privately. Resident in Australia since 1995, he is a member of the Foreign Correspondents' Association in Sydney and Germany's LOOK agency.



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DON'T MISS ...

DIARY NOTES

By Alice Griffin

MAKE A DATE TO CELEBRATE THESE DIVERSE EVENTS AROUND THE COUNTRY.

Noosa Farmers' Market, Tourism Australia



YEAR-ROUND (QLD)

Noosa Farmers' Market

Beautiful beaches, relaxed coastal vibes and a sunny climate draw visitors to Noosa year-round. Every Sunday the region's fresh food reigns supreme at the Noosa Farmers' Market. With divine coffee, marinades, freshly-baked bread, seafood and cheeses aplenty, Noosa Farmers' Market gives visitors the chance to meet local producers and sample the distinctive flavours of the Sunshine Coast.

noosafarmersmarket.com.au



SEPT 2-20 (NSW)

Daffodils at Rydal

Spring has brought a bountiful crop of golden daffodils to the gardens of Rydal, a small country village nestled in the hills between Bathurst and Lithgow. Named after the English town where William Wordsworth, author of the famous poem, *The Daffodils*, lived, Rydal village celebrates the writer's fervour for the flower, showcasing the yellow bulbs in a striking Australian bush setting. With open gardens, food and live music, Daffodils at Rydal is an ideal festival for green thumbs and families alike.

rydal.com.au

SEPT 16-OCT 4 (VIC)

Melbourne Fringe Festival

From contemporary and quirky expressionists to traditional performers, Melbourne Fringe Festival showcases independent creatives in all their forms. Spread



SEPTEMBER 26-27 (ACT)

Handmade Canberra

The best and brightest of Canberra's local designers come together at the Handmade markets in the national capital. From quirky one-of-a-kind accessories to cute cupcakes, floral bouquets and everything in between, Handmade Canberra shines a light on chic handcrafted pieces and the inventive local producers that create them.

handmadecanberra.com.au



across 10 vibrant venues, the festival features the very latest in comedy, music, theatre, circus, dance, design and visual art media. Indeed, the program has something for everyone, and lends a helping hand to all aspiring artists looking for a break into the market.

melbournefringe.com.au

OCT 10-12 (VIC)

Drink Art Food Torquay

The home of Bells Beach and the birthplace of iconic brands Rip Curl and Quicksilver is the base for a weekend-long celebration of all things local. In its third year, Drink Art Food Torquay features the best of the coastal town's bites, beverages, arts and music with galleries, live entertainment, food trails and a luscious long lunch among the weekend's highlights.

daftorquay.com



CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:

Melbourne Fringe Festival celebrates the arts; bites at Drink Art Food Torquay; a performance at Fringe; a bright blossom during Daffodils at Rydal; fresh produce at Noosa Farmers' Market; florist's best blooms at Handmade Canberra; cute and crafty homewares at Handmade Canberra.

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DON'T MISS ...



OCT 16-NOV 1 (NSW)

Orange Wine Fest

Fine wine devotees rejoice in the return of the annual Orange Wine Fest where gourmet food, drink and country hospitality unite. Explore the vinous spirit of the rich Orange region during the two-week festivities with night markets, tastings, farm-gate tours and dining among the vines all on offer.

tasteorange.com.au



CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:

A standout piece at Sculpture by the Sea; gourmet food and wine are the order of the day at Orange Wine Fest; the historic Fremantle Markets remain a crowd favourite; visitors from far and wide enjoy tunes at Jazz in the Vines; Grafton turns purple during the Jacaranda Festival.

OCT 22-NOV 8 (NSW)

Sculpture by the Sea

Tourist hot-spot Bondi Beach is even more alluring during late spring when the spectacular coastal walk from Bondi to Tamarama is transformed into a two-kilometre-long sculpture park. Returning for its 19th year on the trot, Sculpture by the Sea features more than 100 sculptures by talented artists from Australia and abroad. Striking statues coupled with the breathtaking backdrop of Australia's most famous beach makes this event a standout.

sculpturebythesea.com

OCT 30-NOV 8 (NSW)

Jacaranda Festival

A town's tribute to the prolific purple petals that paint the streets lilac every spring, Grafton's Jacaranda Festival celebrates its 81st birthday this year. As the longest-running festival in the country, the event is rich in history and tradition, with a Queen crowning and a gala ball just some of the notable events. An open-garden display,



YEAR-ROUND (WA)

Fremantle Markets

First opening its doors to horse-and-cart traders in 1897, Perth's leading markets hold the allure of days gone by. The transport may have changed, but locals and tourists continue to enjoy Fremantle Markets' vibrant mix of arts, crafts and food sellers in the heritage-listed site. Boasting more than 150 stalls each weekend, Fremantle Markets deliver passionate small businesses and creatives to the public in a rich cultural setting.

fremantlemarkets.com.au



Venetian carnival, float parade, fun run, afternoon tea, picnic and the Clarence Valley Country Muster are all highlights of the two-week celebration.

jacarandafestival.org.au

OCT 31 (NSW)

Jazz in the Vines

Jumping and jiving are the order of the day at the annual music festival, Jazz in the Vines. Each year locals and visitors turf out on a paddock in the heart of Hunter Valley vineyards to enjoy some of the genre's grooviest entertainers. Featuring the musical prowess of James Morrison, Steve Clisby and the Admirals Own Big Band, music enthusiasts of all ages will love this year's Jazz in the Vines.

jazzinthhevines.com.au



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BAKER'S DOZEN

SPRING'S ARRIVAL CALLS FOR A FLORAL FOCUS. TRY THESE BOTANIC-INSPIRED DECOR AND LIFESTYLE ACCESSORIES FOR BLOOMING BRILLIANT RESULTS.

Compiled by Alice Griffin

Jurlique



4



- 1 Harney & Sons Mother's Bouquet floral tea, \$22.95, downthatlittlelane.com.au
- 2 Floral Tea dresses, POA, sohomode.etsy.com
- 3 Fresh and Floral DIY cake kit,

- \$99.95, mummacakes.com.au
- 4 Arnica cream, \$45, jurlique.com.au
- 5 Floral clutch, \$70, giftshopbrooklyn.etsy.com
- 6 Marc Jacobs Daisy Eau So Fresh EDT, \$115, cotoy.com





- 7 Tait Birdcabin, \$190, madebytait.com.au
- 8 Peony No. 3 phone case, \$35, society6.com/hilaryupton
- 9 The Herb & Flower Cookbook by Pip McCormac, \$39.95, hardiegrant.com.au/books
- 10 Erin Petson Aqua print, \$120, urbanroad.com.au
- 11 Lewes bow tie, \$58, dinamalkova.etsy.com
- 12 Ted Baker Sugar Sweet mini notebooks, \$25.20, annabeljames.co.uk
- 13 Jsalal Fresh Cut Roses soy candle, \$10, jsalasoycandles.com.au



GOOD KARMA

THE PLANETS ALIGNED FOR YOGA TEACHER ROSE HAWKINS WITH A MOVE TO THE SUNSHINE COAST HINTERLAND.

By Kirsty McKenzie, photography Anastasia Karayannidis, styling Simone Barter





As shopping lists go, Rose Hawkins drew up a doozy when she went searching for the right property for relocating her family and yoga studio. With four adult children, she needed five bedrooms so they and their partners and children could all comfortably visit at the same time. Having grown up in the wide open spaces of the Northern Territory and central western Queensland, Rose knew her dream home needed to be have some land around it. She also wanted to run yoga classes and retreats from home so a studio was another box on the wish list.

It may have taken five years of searching, but amazingly Rose found precisely what she was looking for not far from Montville in the ranges behind the Sunshine Coast. "The house not only had the requisite number of bedrooms, it also had a cool farmhouse profile," she says. "It's on acreage with a beautiful outlook so there's space for people to be alone. The fact that it came with a studio and office and a swimming pool was a bonus, and it's all within an hour and a half's drive of Brisbane, which is essential for city dwellers looking for a weekend retreat."

As it's turned out, there was even more good karma

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:

A five-year search led Rose to the ideal country property in the Sunshine Coast Hinterland; Rose decorated the living room with her bright pink lounge in mind, painting her coffee table the same vibrant shade to match..





**CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:**

Rose describes her decorating style as country with a contemporary edge; light and colourful interiors provide the perfect backdrop for Rose's much-loved pieces; pink furniture is grounded by neutral walls and elegant accessories; Rose's mint green hutch has travelled with her through the years.



coming her way, as within a week of moving in three years ago she'd met her new partner, Steve Scott. "I'd been on my own for seven years and I was so happy I didn't care if I stayed that way," she recalls. "Steve does maintenance work and I got him to come and do some odd jobs. We got along well and each time he came back we found we had more in common. After a while it just seemed inevitable that we should be together."

Rose's first encounter with yoga was as a teenage boarder at the independent St Peter's Lutheran College in Brisbane. "It was a progressive school in many ways," she says. "In fact I had already been introduced to the benefits of stretching by my mother, who was an early adopter. When I finally reconnected with a yoga teacher when I was living on a farm near Emerald, I found it very helpful for dealing with the stresses of life on the land. I wish that more country women would take that time for themselves. Once they connect with a teacher they can practise at home with the help of apps or DVDs. The important thing about yoga is it's not just exercise, it's equally about the breathing and meditation and that's what's really helpful at times of stress. Later, when my marriage broke down and I moved to Rockhampton, where my children were at school, it was the practice of yoga that got me through."

Rose's personal passion for yoga morphed into a profession when she completed teacher's training and ➔





"The fact that it came with a studio and office and a swimming pool was a bonus, and it's all within an hour and a half's drive of Brisbane, which is essential for city dwellers looking for a weekend retreat."



Rose and her partner, Steve, met just one week after she moved into her Sunshine Coast hinterland home.



**CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:**

Relaxed outdoor spaces provide ample room for Rose's many house guests; the modern-rustic feel extends to the property's exterior; the country home is just as charming from the outside; splashes of colour adorn every part of the home.



followed up with advanced courses in India at Rishikesh, Pune and Rajasthan. These days she's completing an intensive yoga therapy (for illness) course and has a full schedule of classes at her studio. As well, she offers monthly weekend retreats and private residential retreats for small groups of six to 10 on demand. For these she adds to her already packed program by cooking organic, vegetarian feasts for her students. "It's wonderful to see the impact a weekend of yoga and reflection can have," she says. "People come for a reason even if they don't realise it at the time. I receive an amazing amount of mail from students detailing how their lives have changed after a retreat. For many of them it's the first time in ages that they've left their everyday environment and paused to reflect on what changes they want to make."

Rose adds that the home she shares with family and visitors is the physical embodiment of her life's journey. "I've always loved country-style interiors, but with an edge," she says. "Decorating has been my thing since I was just out of school and doing my nursing training. I remember the thrill of ripping up the lino in my share house and finding beautiful black and white marble tiles underneath. I like nothing better than finding quirky pieces in antique shops. But I'm not what you would call a constant rearranger." 





COUNTRY RETREAT



**CLOCKWISE****FROM LEFT:**

Rose's travels in India guide her eclectic use of colour, fabric and texture; a white backdrop allows vintage pieces

to shine; Rose draws style inspiration from interior designer Tricia Guild; vibrant paintings and prints bedeck the walls of this cute and colourful bedroom.



Once I'm happy with a room or corner, I usually live with it. Nor am I a constant shopper. Most of my decorative items have been with me for a long time and have real meaning for me. The green hutch in the living area came from a church hall in Emerald and has made every move with me. I bought the pink couch from a shop called Watermelon Red in Coolum, before the rest of my furniture followed me down from Rockhampton. So for a couple of months it was sitting on its own in the room and I did have a few moments of anxiety about how it would work. But it did, and that gave me the conviction to paint the coffee table to match."

Rose says her love of colour comes from a life-long fascination with the work of Tricia Guild, founder and director of the English interior furnishings company, Designer's Guild, tempered with a fair measure of influence from her travels in India. "When you travel you realise how far the Indian influence has spread," she adds. "You can see it in French Provençal fabrics and even certain Italian colour combinations."

In her "spare" time, Rose imports ethically and sustainably manufactured fabrics from India under the label of India Rose Textiles and dabbles in painting for a hobby. "I drift in and out of painting depending on when I find time," she says. "It's been a lovely journey and I truly believe I have yoga to thank for most of it. Every now and then it just dawns on me how lucky I am."





LOVE THIS LOOK

Inspired by...

VINTAGE FINDS PAIRED WITH SPLASHES OF COLOUR INTRODUCE A CONTEMPORARY EDGE TO ROSE'S HOME. FOLLOW SUIT WITH THESE DELIGHTFUL PIECES.

↑ Whitewash Butlers Side Table, \$65,
lifestylehomeandliving.com.au

Compiled by Alice Griffin



↑ Cool Mint
Canvas print, \$120,
urbanroad.com.au

← Weiss Louis XV
fauteuil, price
on request,
oficinainglesa.com



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Kip & Co Velvet
pillowcases, \$45 each,
cranmorehome.com.au

↓ Origami Raspberry quilt, \$207,
cranmorehome.com.au



↑ Croft
Pendant in
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beaconlighting.com.au



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Side chair, \$495,
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A FRESH CHAPTER

FOR DESIGNER ROSEMARY HOWE MOVING TO THE HISTORIC VILLAGE OF AUBURN IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S CLARE VALLEY HERALDED THE START OF AN EXCITING NEW CAREER.

By Kirsty McKenzie, photography by Ross Williams, styling Bronte Camilleri

By her own reckoning, Rosemary Howe is on her third incarnation. Born and raised in the farming service centre of Cummins on South Australia's Eyre Peninsula, her family moved to Adelaide to better the children's educational opportunities.

"I went into hairdressing straight out of school and worked at that for 20 years," she explains. "During that time I also lived and worked in England where I met my former husband and had two sons. Then I returned to Australia and moved into interior design, which I have practised for the past 25 years. But now I am in transition again."

This time round, Rosemary has reinvented herself into yet another creative and people-based career as the proprietor of a B&B and café, Meller's of Auburn, in the historic gateway village to the Clare Valley. "I first came to Auburn through a decorating client," she recalls. "I bought my house four years ago and since then have divided my time between Adelaide, where my mother still lives, and here. Then 18 months ago, the opportunity came up to take over a commercial premises in an old stone cottage and I was up for the challenge. So I took over a café that was once in Auburn's general store and also a B&B in an adjacent building and its stables out the back."

Auburn was established in the mid-1800s as a service town for people travelling to the copper mines at Burra to the north. In 1849, the mine superintendent Thomas Henry Williams received a land grant on the site of present-day village, which he subdivided and sold in lots to create a stopover for bullock teams on their way from the mine to Port Wakefield at the apex of St Vincent Gulf. Among the earliest buildings in the fledgling town was the Rising Sun hotel, which still dispenses hospitality today. The Meller's building also dates from these early days and takes its name from Joseph Meller, a builder from Yorkshire who owned a stone quarry just out of town and who was responsible for many of Auburn's early





buildings. A number of them are listed by the National Trust and visitors to Auburn today can learn about their history by visiting the museum in the former Auburn Police Station. Another famous local is poet C.J. Dennis, who was born in Auburn in 1876 and earned popular acclaim for his verse novel, *Songs of a Sentimental Bloke* in the early 1900s.

Rosemary explains that visitors to Meller's are most commonly attracted by the town's rich history and its proximity to the vineyards and cellar doors of the Clare Valley. As well, it's a starting point for the Riesling Trail, a 27-kilometre cycling and walking trail along a disused railway route and its extension, the 19-kilometre Rattler Track. Bikes for exploring all or part of these trails can be hired in Auburn and pickups and drop offs can also be arranged at points along the way. The café, which is open seven days, has become something of an unofficial tourist information bureau for the town and Rosemary says engagement with visitors is one of the many unexpected benefits of the career change.





**CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:**

Rosemary's home pays tribute to her love of all things French; a warm and character-laden dining room; Rosemary used her vast experience in interior design to update the cottage; the property's charming country feel extends to the front garden.



"I was lucky in that my building had good bones, even though it was very small,"

"I wanted to push myself and learn new skills," she explains. "My mother was an amazing country cook, so somewhat surprisingly, my sister and I never learned much from her as we always deferred to her. However, from the outset I was determined that as much of the café's menu as possible would be made on the premises from local, seasonal produce, so I've developed quite a repertoire of home-style comfort dishes." They include chicken pot pies, individual shepherd's pies and a zucchini slice and vegetable frittata made with free-range eggs sourced by contra for coffees. Rosemary's 88-year-old mother still makes the best scones so she has been press-ganged into supplying Meller's with her handiwork. Rosemary herself has also branched out into baking and makes a mean orange and almond cake, as

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:

Bright furnishings are tempered with neutral walls; the kitchen exudes old-world country charm; Rosemary expresses her Francophile sensibilities through the home's interiors; high ceilings and ivory shades create a calming boudoir.

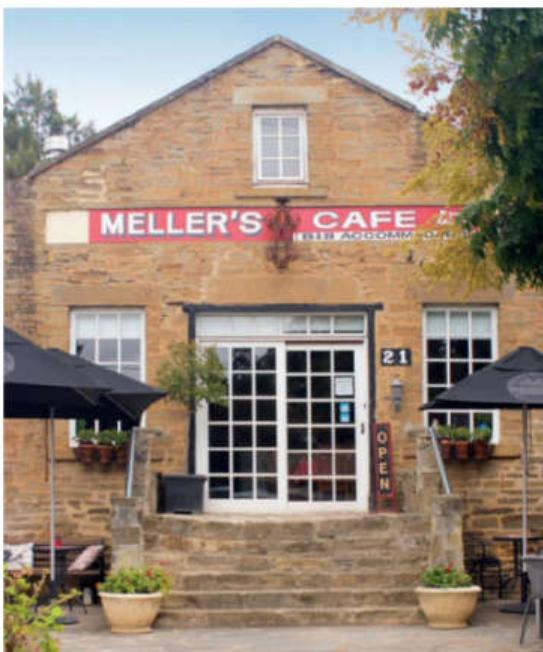
well as a delicious Irish apple cake and sour cream slice.

All this cooking, creating and being on the floor at the café as well as maintaining a list of interior design clients means that Rosemary has little interest in cooking in her rare moments off. "We're lucky to have several fine restaurants in town, including the bistro at the pub and Terroir Auburn, which is right next door to the B&B," she says. "The town has a great mix of old farming families, people from the wine industry, local business owners and recent arrivals like me, so it's a vibrant community and there is always something going on."

With her vast experience in interiors, Rosemary was well placed to decorate her cottage, which is about a kilometre down the road from Meller's. "I was lucky in that my building had good bones, even though it was very small," she recalls. "Then I gave everything a fresh coat of paint and put new carpet down and made a few structural changes. I shifted the internal laundry to an outdoor shed to make room for a pantry but otherwise it was pretty much just a matter







of working out what pieces of furniture would fit where and what needed to go into storage. I was also lucky that, as well as the beautiful stone building, I inherited gorgeous Mintaro slate crazy-paving in the back room, so I had a very solid framework in which to insert my Francophile sensibilities.”

She adds that, even with her business clients, she’s a big advocate of adaptive reuse and often suggests recovering, repainting and reupholstering rather than buying new pieces. “Your furniture is part of your back story and it’s nice to be able to read that in a home,” she says. “That’s why I hang onto things. Life is a journey and while it’s good to start a new chapter from time to time, it’s also good to acknowledge your history.”

For more information visit mellersofauburn.com.au.

**CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:**
Meller's farmhouse feel and rich history attract both locals and visitors; the café retains the stone walls from years gone by; Meller's cafe is a great addition to the heritage town; Rosemary's new business venture allows her to live the country lifestyle she has always dreamt of.



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So lovely was the loneliness of a wild lake.
— Edgar Allan Poe

Lake Jindabyne, NSW

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GYPSY SPIRIT

KIRSTY BALLENTINE-TURNBULL
BRINGS EQUAL MEASURES OF
WANDERLUST AND PASSION FOR A
COOL BOHEMIAN AESTHETIC TO HER
HOMEWARES IMPORTING BUSINESS.

By Kirsty McKenzie, photography Ryan Murphy

As the self-proclaimed child of backpacking hippies, Kirsty Ballentine-Turnbull says gypsy spirit is in her DNA. Born in London to a South African dad and an Australian mum, Kirsty spent her early years in a Kombi exploring the world with her intrepid parents. They eventually settled back in Perth when she was aged five, but wanderlust was never far from the surface, and the growing family was often on the road seeking new adventures.

When she was 14, the Ballentines upped stakes and moved to Brisbane, where Kirsty completed her high schooling and went to uni. The peripatetic family

**CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:**

Kirsty relaxes in her Federation-style home; a neutral palette allows striking art and furniture to shine; a tribal motif runs throughout the entire home.







"I'd always had an appreciation of architecture and design, but suddenly I had a blank canvas to work on."



In the process of
decorating her home,
Kirsty uncovered a
passion for sourcing and
designing handcrafted
homewares, opening
the door to an exciting
new career.





THIS PAGE:

Kirsty's interior design prowess extends to the rear deck and backyard.

OPPOSITE: The entire family, pooch included, loves the home's light and airy feel.



moved on to Melbourne, but Kirsty flew in the face of tradition, and stayed in Brisbane to graduate and build a corporate career in learning and organisational development.

"By the time I was 24 I had a house, a car and a great job," she recalls. "But I also had the travel bug, so I headed off to London and spent the next few years living and working there and in Europe. I met and became great friends with my future husband, Jonathan Turnbull, who is a Perth boy, in the UK. After moving back to Australia we began our relationship. He then developed his career in IT, management consultancy and property development."

Kirsty continued to work as a HR consultant specialising in executive coaching and career transitioning while raising Ava, who is now eight, and Charlie, who is six. But for the girl who liked nothing better than to lock herself in her bedroom and listen to Fleetwood Mac while designing clothes and dashing out charcoal drawings, there was always an unrequited creative gene bouncing around in the background. Then three years ago Kirsty and Jonathan bought a 1920s Federation-style property on a ramshackle granny block in the inner-Perth suburb of Nedlands and Kirsty found a whole new outlet for her artistic tendencies.

"I'd always had an appreciation of architecture and design, but suddenly I had a blank canvas to work on," she



recalls. "The house had already had an extension when we bought it, but it was up to us to knock out walls and open it up with bi-folds onto the wraparound verandah."

Gradually, the woman who had previously been accustomed to telling other people how to make changes to their careers found herself making her own transition. "It all began when I wanted to buy a shell chandelier for the living area," she recalls. "I searched everywhere but couldn't find anything like what I had in mind. Then I went on a trip to Bali and discovered the most exquisitely crafted pendants in all shapes and sizes. By the time I came home I was well on the way to becoming an importer of beautiful hand-crafted homewares and clothing, all with a Bohemian edge."

She didn't have to look far for a name for her business. She'd stumbled across *losari*, an ancient Javanese word meaning spirit of the earth, while researching names for her

children and tucked it away for a future use. "Losari kind of summed up all the beautiful products I started to source," she explains. "Feather craft, delicately carved skulls, tribal art and crochet blankets and gorgeous fabrics from all over Indonesia, India, Bangladesh and China have a place in the repertoire. We've grown exponentially since I launched two years ago, but the essence of luxurious homewares and clothes with a free spirit remains at the core."

In that utterly unpredictable way life has of turning up curve balls, Kirsty's tight-knit family was dealt a massive blow about the same time as the business was launching when her mother suffered a catastrophic stroke. "Suddenly we found ourselves sharing responsibility for her intensive care around the clock," Kirsty explains. "I had just started on this amazing adventure and I didn't know how I would find the time, energy or space to keep going and fit Losari

**THESE PAGES:**

Pieces from Kirsty's homewares brand, Losari, are dotted about the house.





**CLOCKWISE FROM
THIS IMAGE:**

Eight-year-old Ava enjoys relaxing outside; an all-white Bohemian boudoir; a shell chandelier makes a strong statement in the living room.





in around her care. But we took it in shifts and gradually Mum improved to the point where she could come home, admittedly, with high-level care from all of us. We've always shared a mutual love for things from faraway places and cultures, so I felt I needed to keep going for both of us."

Fortunately, the worldwide web makes it possible for Kirsty to browse, discover and connect with artisan producers all over the world from the comfort of her home office. Gradually, however, she has come to the realisation that as most of her custom is based in the eastern states, it makes much more sense to move over there. So the Ballantine gypsy caravan is gearing up for yet another move, this time to Queensland, where Kirsty has taken on a business partner and established a distribution warehouse.

"Now I've become the catalyst for change," she says. "My brother and sister-in-law hope to move to northern NSW so they can be close enough to continue to help out with Mum. The rest of us, hopefully my parents included, will be following. We've always done things as a family and this new chapter will be no different. It's a funny feeling as the 11 years in Perth are the longest I've ever lived in one place. But we are gypsy souls and moving is what gypsies do. And challenging though it is to pack up everything and make the change, I feel it is the right thing to do. Life goes on and it just wouldn't suit any of us to shy away from the next challenge. It's exciting and a bit frightening, but I have a deep conviction that it will be for the long-term good." 

For more information visit losari.com.au.

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Music and mirth

LIKE THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL, CRAIG ROBSON HAS BEEN RIDING A CAROUSEL OF ADVENTURE ACROSS MANY DECADES.

By Meryl Hancock, photography Ken Brass

Behind a simple door to an unobtrusive warehouse in the Sydney suburb of Mascot lurks a giant fairground masterfully disguised. Dance hall organs of unfathomable proportion sit poised to perform, Grecian busts grace dark corners, fairy lights wink and a raucous chorus of (*How Much is that Doggy in the Window?*) bursts from a spinning carousel.

The rendition is bold and jaunty and conjures up memories of riding in circles, waving gaily at parents and onlookers, and not wanting to get off. The fun facilitator appears, waistcoated showman Craig Robson. "I collect three things — mechanical musical instruments, a bit of steam and a lot of dust," he announces, a humble introduction to what is a grand-scale collection showcasing fine music production, musical arrangement, carving and engineering from the 1850s through to the 1950s. "I started off playing the piano, then realised that mechanical music sounded so much better," he adds.

Propelled by his love of both engineering and music, Craig's quest began four decades ago in Toowoomba with a Dutch street organ called Amsterdam. While still at school, he'd owned and rented out vintage cars for weddings but this was something else, and kicked off his collection. Through meticulous research, Craig improved his knowledge base and tinkering skills, and gained entry into a worldwide network of collectors and curators, all of whom shared his passion. Europe was a hotbed of finds. While visiting the world-famous Taj Mahal organ in Switzerland with his family, he remarked, "I'm going to buy this one day," and, although at the time they felt he needed his head read, his prophecy eventually materialised.

In his fairground, Craig disappears behind the eight-metre-high, intricately carved instrument and Saint



Welcome to Fairground Follies, where history meets entertainment in a very non-conventional fashion.







Cecilia and Aphrodite spark up. Cultures collide as the 1924 Taj Mahal booms out the American hit, *Rock Around the Clock*, playing from the Belgian 1930s organ component built by Mortier, while the Italian-crafted facade glimmers with gold leaf. Craig then treats the smaller street organ, De Klok, to some attention. Feeding a cardboard and linen holed book through the working side of the organ, he repeatedly turns a large wheel. When the machine eventually wheezes into action, he explains the crank, bellows, valve and pressure relationship that gives rise to the sound from the pipes. Although it spent most of its life working outside the Amsterdam Stock Exchange, De Klok remains in excellent condition. "We try to keep the instruments as close to original as we can," Craig explains.

Popularised from 1880 through to 1940, dance hall organs typically comprised a working box with an elaborate

timber facade. Families rented smaller versions for busking and varying sizes were used in cafés, spiegeltents (large, mirrored tents) and grand ballrooms. Fairground organs, including carousels, were wheeled and portable, towed by the showman's steam engine. Some played entire church hymn repertoires to the thronging crowds. As musical style changed with the advent of jazz in the 1930s, formality relaxed and cymbals and tambourines took centre stage. Craig demonstrates a Decap built in 1949 with robotic jazz musicians that rise and fall in sync with the music. "The manufacturers realised that people were becoming blasé about fine craftwork," he says. "So they switched the instruments to the front of the amusement and added piano accordions, which were the most popular instrument."

The best find in Craig's book is an unrestored quality instrument, which is becoming harder to come by.



**CLOCKWISE
FROM THIS IMAGE:**

Rising to popularity in the early 1900s in Europe, dance hall organs are spectacles in their own right; popular

music influenced what the organs would play, such as with the advent of jazz in the 1930s; statues adorn the grounds; the De Klok Dutch street organ.

**THESE IMAGES:**

Craig prefers instruments that appeal to all the senses. He realised early on that he finds the music of a mechanical organ much more pleasing than that of a more mainstream instrument, such as a piano or violin.

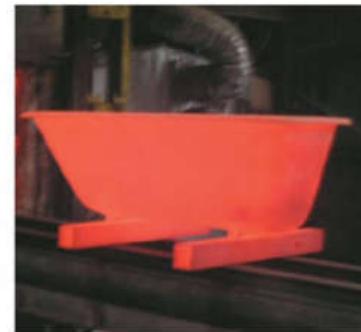
Membership to several clubs and associations around Australia and internationally keeps him in the loop. Now retired from a career in business management, he declares he's stopped collecting, so the majority of his time and money is spent renovating and maintaining his extraordinary pieces. Help from specialist craftsmen affords Craig some leisure time for his Latin American and ballroom dancing, surfing and meditation. "The balance of life is most important," he adds.

On cue, the *Chicken Dance* fills the fairground and bottoms start to wiggle. The Golden Lion, a 1920s European street

organ is responsible and the visuals are as captivating as the music — carved lion heads arise from African landscapes lavished with gold curlicues. In a back room filled with smaller-scale but no less precious instruments, Craig tenderly works his rarest machine, the Maharajah Orchestron, circa 1870, designed for a palace. Soon after, mechanical violins twang from the Hupfeld Phonoliszt Violina as Craig emphasises the sheer sophistication of each instrument.

His knowledge and enthusiasm are infectious but what will happen when the Scarlet Pimpernel rides off into the sunset? "I've been lucky enough to obtain these pieces through hard work and passion," Craig says. "I would rather they were eventually redispersed throughout Australia and the world than put in a museum." My time is up and the carnival is over. The crowd is dizzy with nostalgia yet showman Craig has hardly scratched the surface. 

Fairground Follies is financed by fundraising events and educational tours. For more information, visit fairgroundfollies.com.



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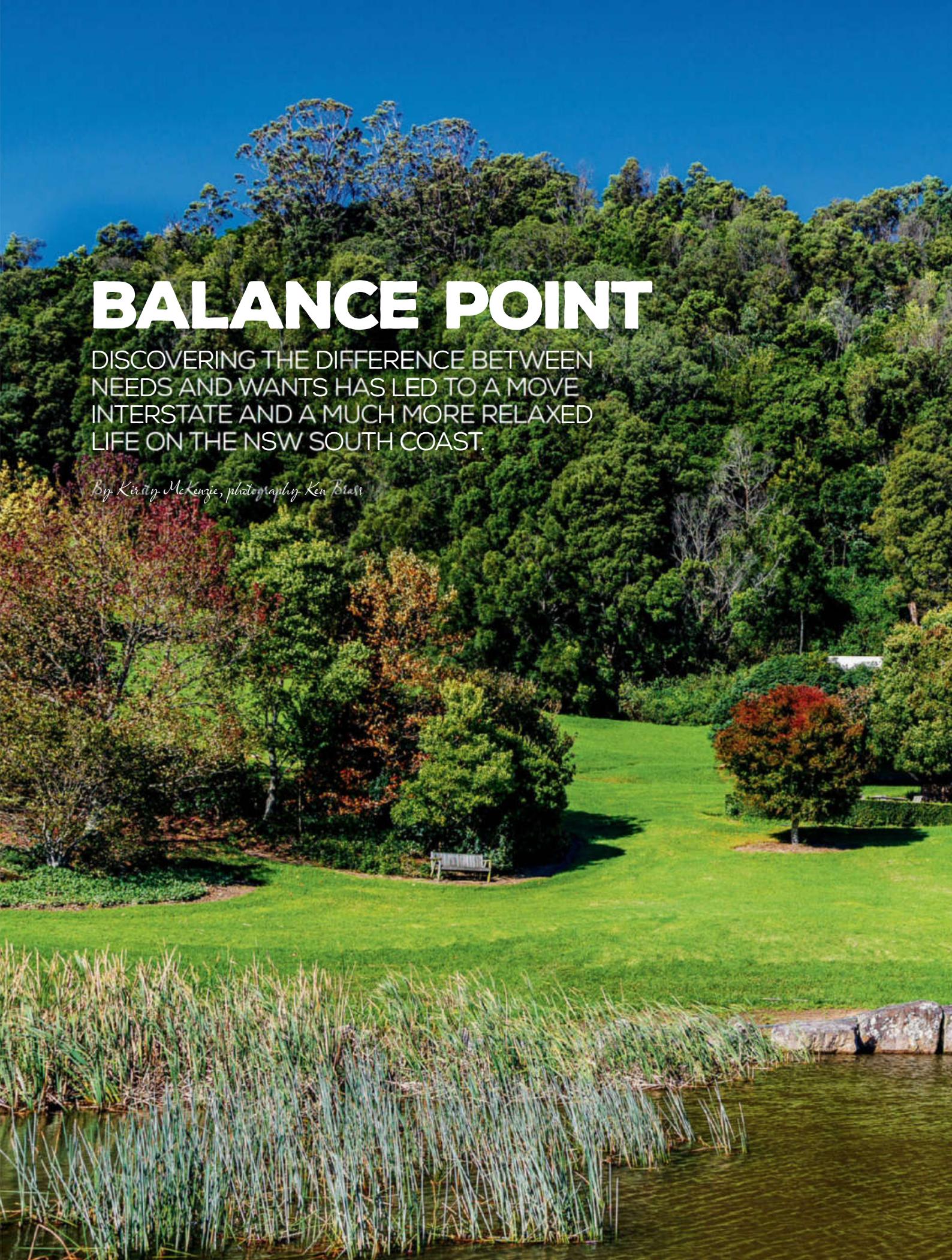


ANTIQUE BATHS SYDNEY

BALANCE POINT

DISCOVERING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NEEDS AND WANTS HAS LED TO A MOVE INTERSTATE AND A MUCH MORE RELAXED LIFE ON THE NSW SOUTH COAST.

By Kirby McKenzie, photography Ken Brass







**CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:**
Although Roger and Toni Stent used to live on the Mornington Peninsula, one of Victoria's more desirable addresses, they had little time to enjoy it. As the general manager of an international aviation company, Roger spent more time on a plane and in hotels than at home. Toni's situation wasn't much better as she worked in customer service management in Melbourne, where the hours were long and work usually followed her home at night.

Just like a scene from a fairy tale, a tree-lined, winding road leads to the Stent family residence; the move has enabled the couple to set up a B&B-style business; with the wind in their hair and smiles on their faces, Roger and Toni finally have time to simply sit and enjoy life; rolling green hills and lush surrounds create the ideal backdrop for whiling away the hours.

"We had a lovely home and, from the outside, it probably looked as though we had everything one could want," Toni recalls. "But after years of being constantly under the pump, we both came to the realisation that there must be more to life than relentless work."

And so began a four-year search for an established hospitality business. "After long careers travelling and staying in venues all over the world, we both had a clear idea of the kind of property we wanted to run," Toni says. "We're

Located in the lee of the Illawarra escarpment, about 10 minutes drive from the tourist village of Berry and 20 minutes from the rural hideaway of Kangaroo Valley...



both 'people' people but we knew we didn't want a B&B with guests living under the same roof. After all, we were wanting to escape from constant work, not jump out of the frying pan straight back into the fire."

They knew they'd found what they were looking for the moment they set eyes on the Drawing Rooms of Berry in 2009. Located in the lee of the Illawarra escarpment, about 10 minutes by car from the tourist village of Berry, 20 minutes from the rural hideaway of Kangaroo Valley and 15 minutes to Seven Mile Beach, the 15-acre (six-hectare) property is set in rolling green former dairying country, with a three-bedroom guesthouse close to the main homestead, three lodges with two bedrooms each and a villa just for two. The guesthouse operates as a B&B, and while the other accommodation is self-catering, the Stents can organise caterers to prepare meals as guests require.

"We have such wonderful local restaurants that we decided from the outset not to compete with them,"







TREE CHANGE

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT:

Afternoon teatime at the Drawing Rooms of Berry; the dining room features a bay window that's been perfectly framed by cushions, creating a living work of art in front of which to sit and stare; vibrantly coloured flowers add the finishing touches to the interiors; the warmth of the fireplace creates a homely ambience.





Toni explains. "Some guests choose to bring all their own food or pick up local produce and spend the weekend cooking. For others, that's the last thing they'd want to do on holiday, so they tend to eat out or order in." Much the same applies to activities. Some opt for the full program of bush and beach walking, surfing, swimming, kayaking and horse riding, while others opt for nothing more strenuous than reading a good book on the verandah or strolling the stalls of the Berry Country Fair, held on the first Sunday of each month. Those in search of more retail therapy have abundant opportunity in the main village, where homewares and curio shops vie with galleries and craft outlets for shoppers' attention.

When it comes to dining, the Stents recommend Berry's Sourdough Cafe & Milkwood Bakery for light meals, the casual Mediterranean fare at Mezzadellas, organic Asian delights at the Hungry Duck, and contemporary Australian indulgences at South on Albany. A little further down the way

at Nowra, Wharf Rd boasts a chef's hat while closer to Berry, Silos Restaurant has a splendid cellar in a former grain silo.

"Berry offers such an interesting mix of people, it's little wonder so many city residents are attracted to the area," Toni says. "Alongside the former corporates, there are fourth-generation farmers, many of whom will be selling their wares at the produce markets on the second Saturday and fourth Sunday of each month. Kangaroo Valley has a more down-to-earth, creative component but together, we are all a very caring and cohesive unit. In all the years we lived on the Mornington Peninsula, we never really became part of the community. But here, we feel we're real village people. So much so that one day I went to town and forgot my wallet but was still able to do all the shopping I needed. I didn't think that kind of trust existed anywhere anymore, let alone in a community that, after all, is only two-and-a-half-hours' drive from Sydney or Canberra."

Roger adds that while the business keeps them busy,





"We've come to appreciate that riches for us are in this wonderful lifestyle and we've finally achieved that elusive thing they call work/life balance."

they now have time to smell the roses and enjoy the odd round of golf or an art class. "Because the way we bought the property was quite emotional, we initially said we'd give it seven years," he explains. "But now we've been here six years, I think the plan will be extended a bit. We've come to appreciate that riches for us are in this wonderful lifestyle and we've finally achieved that elusive thing they call work/life balance."

"We've always had a bit of a notion to take a grown-up gap year in Italy," Toni adds. "But having moved to Berry, it's less imperative now. It will probably still happen, just somewhere further down the track. Being in hospitality means you have to plan well in advance if you want to take time off. But now there's less need for a holiday because living here is a bit like being on permanent holiday." *ME*

For more information visit drawingrooms.com.au.



**CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:**

A guest cottage master bedroom with ensuite opening onto its own private balcony is the perfect way to start the day; various works of art feature throughout the home, adding both character and colour; windows capture views from every angle.

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SET IN STONE

WHAT STARTED AS A MEANS OF DRAWING ATTENTION TO AN OPEN GARDEN HAS DEVELOPED INTO A SPLENDID TWICE-YEARLY SCULPTURE EXHIBITION.

By Kirby McKenzie, photography Kim Selby

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Bird sculptures in full flight; maintaining the garden is a labour of love for Mary and Bede; sculptures big and small are featured in the exhibition.

With their collective extensive experience in marketing and advertising, it was hardly surprising that Bede and Mary Gibson sought to value add when they first opened their garden to the public in 2012. In what amounted to a tentative toe in the water, they invited four sculptors to exhibit. Encouraged by the sale of all the works, the Gibsons invited more sculptors the following year. When they open their garden this spring, more than 60 works by 15 different artists will be displayed in the three acres of formal garden they have created on Mica Grange, their property near Castlemaine in the Victorian Goldfields.

Regular readers of *Australian Country* will remember Bede and Mary's story from August last year; how their daughter and her then husband took over the 100-acre cattle farm and started the garden in 2004 with plants and trees gifted for their wedding. When Bede and Mary retired from their respective careers in marketing and fashion in 2006, they relocated from Sydney back to their home state of Victoria. Their daughter was finding the daily commute to Melbourne a bit of a stretch, so it just made sense for her parents to take up where she left off. Mica Grange has well and truly kept the couple busy ever since. In what has turned out to be something of a Claytons retirement, drystone walls, rockeries, gravel driveways, sandstone-paved







**CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:**

Mica Grange steals hearts; while sculptures come and go, the magnificence of the garden endures each season; the garden is adorned with works; display pieces are chosen based on quality and originality.



areas and lawned sections have been added to the granite boulder-stewn landscape, and a protea and leucadendron garden has been established alongside countless roses. Old-fashioned cottage flowers flourish as well as natives and the organic vegetable garden and orchard provides year-round fruit and vegies for home and a range of preserves that are sold during the open months.

"We're blessed with good soil that is rich in minerals," Bede explains. "Because it drains well, it dries off quickly so it needs lots of water. Fortunately we have a good spring-fed dam so we can pump water whenever we need it so we can grow just about anything."

When the Gibsons were first invited to open the garden to the public in 2012, they hit on the idea of adding sculptures to make a visit even more memorable. "A good marketing strategy needs a mission statement," Bede observes. "Ours has become merging the wonders of art with the beauty of gardens."

"We're showing people how they can improve their outdoor space, whether it's a large area or just a balcony or courtyard, by adding artworks," Mary adds. "They don't have to be huge pieces. Just about everyone has a space of some sort that can be enhanced."

Encouraged by the popularity of their first opening,





**CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:**

Art and nature combine during Mica Grange's open garden event; the couple selects works to satisfy visitors' various tastes; artists across Australia are keen to get involved and have

their works showcased in this wonderful event; contemporary sculptures come alive in the English cottage-style garden; the variety of sculptures featured ensure there is something to suit all visitors' garden styles and sizes.

the Gibsons decided to extend their opening periods to make it easier for the sculptors. "Moving works in and out for a short period is a lot of effort," Bede says. "So we now open for a month in both autumn and spring. We're open every weekend during those periods, which include the Easter and Melbourne Cup breaks and weekdays by appointment."

Never one to do things by halves, Mary also serves morning and afternoon teas on the homestead's large deck, which has commanding views across the garden to Mount Alexander and the Great Dividing Range. She bakes up a storm most mornings and offerings include scones and five or six different homemade cakes. Friends and family help out with service and she says it's so popular that some visitors return three or four times during each open period.

The list of artists varies according to their other exhibition commitments, but Mary has a short list of locals who are usually eager to have their works displayed. They include metal sculptor Yvonne George, multi-media artist Dawn Robinson, Lee Adams and Barry McLoughlan of Bendigo's Wired For Living, which produces barbed wire works and fields of metal poppies, ceramicist Ellen Hansa-Stanyer and bell maker Anton Hassell. To this mix Mary adds works by other sculptors she encounters on her travels or who approach her for inclusion. "I have developed a pretty





good idea of what works with our visitors," she says. "We have such a variety of display spaces in the garden that there's always room for new works to add diversity. When we're travelling, I'm famous for stopping at any place that looks like someone's making something that might be good for our visitors to take home. It doesn't have to be big, but it does have to be handmade, original and of a high standard of craftsmanship."

Winter is the time the Gibsons usually hit the road visiting their adult offspring and their families, who live all over the country. "It's lovely to catch up with them and meet potential new sculptors," Mary says. "But we don't like to be away for too long. I'm a firm believer that what you show in spring is the work you do in winter, so there never really is a quiet time in our garden."

Mica Grange will be open from October 17 to November 22 this year and from March 14 to April 17, 2016. For more information visit micagrange.com.au.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:
From the lifelike to the extravagant, the sculptures at Mica Grange are simply striking; all sculptures at the event are handcrafted; a scarecrow guards the organic vegie patch.





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BEACON OF BOUNTY

A FAMILY TRADITION OF HOLIDAYING BY THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD RESULTED IN A SPECIAL VENUE FOR SHARING GOOD FOOD WITH FRIENDS.

By Kathy Moxed, photography Kim Selby

Aireys Inlet is a delightfully uncorrupted little seaside haven 90 minutes west around the coast from Melbourne and sits on one of Australia's most iconic tourist attractions, the Great Ocean Road.

The dominant landmark at Aireys Inlet is the Split Point Lighthouse, known locally as the White Queen. It still functions out on the point as a reminder of the days when shipwrecks were common and safety was not taken for granted. It also acts as an educator for coastal conservation. A guided tour to the top will have you look down on the lighthouse keepers' cottages, which sit closer to the cliffs at the base of the lighthouse. When the cottages came up for lease a couple of years ago, Anna Kelly's family couldn't get there quick enough.

For Anna, Aireys Inlet is the calming countermeasure to her weekly life, which revolves, at a dizzying pace, around her love of farming and food. She is a lamb farmer who





produces, markets and distributes her own product.

It all began when she decided to quit the city life to go home and help her father run the family's 700-hectare farm near Mathoura on the edge of the Riverina Merino district. The 10-year drought put paid to her wool-growing ambitions, however, when she realised that the land could neither support an extra farmer, nor sustain the sheep required for growing wool. After a time helping her father with cattle and cropping, it became apparent that Anna needed her own direction and conditions forced her to rethink tradition. Rather than try to force the landscape into productivity, she found produce to suit the landscape.

With a desire to marry her love of the land with her love of food, research soon revealed that the ideal meat for the conditions was the Dorper, a South African sheep breed that had recently been introduced to Australia. And

thus Anna sidestepped into Dorper lamb production and created Plains Paddock Lamb.

While living in Melbourne prior to her farming return, Anna indulged her love of food by getting to know restaurateurs and chefs. So this was a natural place to turn once she began producing. Her love of food is matched only by her love of the animals and her low-stress handling techniques result in more relaxed animals, which in turn provide a more tender product. The chefs delight in knowing where their meat is sourced and interacting with the grower; they like to keep up to date with what's going on out in the paddock and exactly what they're handling. "The chefs are always keen to know about lambing rates and how the seasons are producing," Anna says. "They're quite involved."

And while Anna involves herself in the wider industry by growing and distributing her own product, she is also on

Aireys Inlet, a small coastal town on Australia's world-famous Great Ocean Road, boasts breathtaking views.





the committee of the Victorian Farmers' Market Association and each Saturday attends farmers' markets in central Victoria and inner Melbourne. "People like to meet the grower and I'm always being asked for recipes," she says. "By face-to-face selling, I can promote the whole beast from neck to tail."

Using low-stress stock handling techniques, Plains Paddock lambs are never worked with dogs and they are transported in small groups to the abattoir late in the evening and processed first thing in the morning. A relaxed animal results in a more succulent muscle fibre. The consumers rarely need convincing any more than Anna's friends do when it comes to her product. Recognised for her demonstrations at the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, weekend butchery courses and cooking classes, they seize the opportunity to spend a weekend down at the lighthouse keepers' cottages at Aireys Inlet. It's a group celebration that is planned months ahead and, of course, the specialty is a long, late lunch of slow-cooked lamb. *Australian Country* was lucky enough to attend one of these get togethers.

"I chose a lamb with a good fat covering and had hung the beast for 10 days prior," Anna explains. "An hour before it went on to cook I took it out of the coolroom to bring it up to room temperature."

A good sized mallee root, known for its density that produces a long burning time and good heat, fuelled the fire, which was then settled and the coals allowed to die down. The lamb went onto a spit over the coals and was turned slowly for four hours over a very low heat with the lid closed. "I basted it regularly using very minimal marinade of salt to add a bit of flavour," Anna adds. "When it was



The Split Point Lighthouse still functions out on the point as a reminder of the days when shipwrecks were common and safety was not taken for granted.

**CLOCKWISE FROM
THIS IMAGE:**

Airey's Split Point Lighthouse is known by locals as the White Queen; the Kelly family jumped at the chance to lease one of the lighthouse keepers' cottages; the kids eagerly await the meal; Anna and her two pups.

**CLOCKWISE FROM
THIS IMAGE:**

The cottage decor pays homage to its past; fresh produce ready for mealtime; the historic cottage retains its old-world charm; a freestanding wood burner warms the seaside property through the colder months.



cooked, I turned it off to rest for 20 minutes. When it was done, I needed one of the guys to help me carry it to the kitchen and carve it. Normally, a 15kg lamb like this would feed 25 people, however our group of eight was ravenous and made a good dent in it. The rest was disbursed among the group and taken home."

Under the picture window that brings in light and an ocean view, lunch was served with condiments of homemade quince sauce and salsa verde made from herbs including oregano, mint, lots of parsley and dill from the cottage garden. Of course there is always the traditional family favourite recipe; in this case, Mrs Ripper's quince jelly. Mrs Ripper is an old family friend and gladly handed on her quince jelly recipe.

The simple lamb recipe and the tender and incredibly tasty meat required little accompaniment and the lunch guests provided home-grown vegetables from their various gardens. They had jacket potatoes with sour cream and a salad of beetroot, lentil and lemon juice. A green salad rounded out the meal.

Anna recommends cooking over coals and if a spit is not available, then maybe use a mesh or grill. It produces a much nicer result than using flames or gas. If the domestic situation doesn't allow for the luxury of an outside fire and hot coals, she suggests lamb shanks in a white wine, slow-cooked lamb roast or family roast with a twist. "I have Mum's clay pot that came from France about 40 years ago and is great for slow cooking," Anna says. "The clay pot holds in all the moisture and produces a beautiful and tender result."





Beetroot and Lentil Salad

**1 bunch (1kg) beetroot, trimmed
400g can brown lentils, drained
and rinsed
¼ cup coarsely chopped
flatleaf parsley
100g feta cheese, crumbled
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 clove garlic, crushed**



**CLOCKWISE FROM
THIS IMAGE:**

The laden table; the group salutes before tucking in; taste testing is a must; beetroot and lentil salad.

Preheat oven to 200°C. Wrap each beetroot in aluminium foil, place on tray and bake in oven for one hour or until beetroot is tender when pierced with a skewer. Remove from oven and, wearing rubber gloves, peel beetroot. Cool and cut into quarters. Combine beetroot, lentils, parsley and feta cheese in a salad bowl and toss with a dressing made by combining the vinegar, olive oil and garlic.

Salsa Verde

**5 handfuls flatleaf parsley
3 handfuls mint
3 handfuls of oregano, coriander
and dill
½ cup rinsed capers
5 cloves garlic**

**2 teaspoons salt
Extra virgin olive oil
Lemon juice, to taste**

Blend all ingredients in a blender or pound with a mortar and pestle until they form a coarse paste.

Quince Jelly

**4kg quinces, some can be a bit green
4 green apples
caster sugar
Muslin, for straining**

Rub dust off quinces and take out black spots. Quarter or chop quinces roughly, combine with apples in a heavy based pot. Cover with water. Place over heat, bring to the boil. Reduce



The simple lamb recipe and the tender and incredibly tasty meat required little accompaniment and the lunch guests provided home-grown vegetables from their various gardens.





heat and simmer, without stirring, for 2 hours, or until the water has some colour and quinces are soft. Strain through muslin and set liquid aside to cool. Add ¼ cup of sugar for each cup of water (ie 1 cup of sugar for 1 litre of liquid), return to heat and simmer until the syrup is rose coloured and sets when a spoonful is dropped onto a cold plate. Pour into sterilised jars, seal and store in a cool, dark place.

Slow-cooked Lamb Shoulder

**1 lamb shoulder whole or boned
Greek oregano (rigani)
Salt & pepper
4 cloves garlic
Extra virgin olive oil
Verjuice, to make a wet rub and
for the roasting pan.
Chicken stock**



Mrs Ripper is an old family friend and she gladly handed on her quince jelly recipe.

Remove lamb from fridge, bring up to room temperature, slash with a knife and rub in a wet mix of crushed oregano, salt and pepper, garlic, olive oil and verjuice. Add stock and more verjuice to the pan with the lamb. Cover the shoulder and place in oven at 110°C. Cook for 5 hours. Turn the heat up to 150°C and cook uncovered for 40 minutes. Remove from oven, tear the meat off the bone with tongs and serve immediately.

Family Roast with a Twist

**1 butterflied lamb leg
4 tablespoons redcurrant jelly
2 tablespoons hot mustard
1 cup lemon juice
125g butter**

**½ cup tomato sauce
4 tablespoons brown sugar**

Place leg in moderate oven (180°C-190°C), fat side up and roast for 20 minutes. Meanwhile, add remaining ingredients to a saucepan on medium heat and stir until smooth. Remove lamb from the oven and coat in half the sauce. Return to the oven tray fat side down and roast for another 30 minutes. Remove and rest for at least 20 minutes. Spread more sauce on the meat and carve.

Note: Anna serves this roast on a rice pilaf made by cooking basmati rice in chicken stock using the absorption method and mixing with softened onions and silverbeet. She serves it with toasted slivered almonds sprinkled on top. 

CLOCKWISE FROM THIS IMAGE:

The family dog hopes for a bite; the divine quince jelly; Anna roasted the lamb for more than four hours before the meal.

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WAY TO GROW

INTRODUCING THE LATEST AND GREATEST TRENDS TO HIT THE OUTDOOR ARENA. ENSURE THE GRASS ISN'T GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE WITH THESE STYLISH PIECES.

Compiled by Alice Griffin



VINE DINING

Make the most of your house and garden and create an outdoor space with furniture to suit the whole family.

LEFT: Lazing poolside is all the more enjoyable with sumptuous and comfortable sofas to lounge around on. With generous seating space and beautiful, weatherproof material, the Manutti Zendō sofa is an all-time Australian Country favourite.

■ [gomodern.co.uk](#)

ABOVE: Crafted from just rope and wood, the Harmen outdoor deckchairs make an understated, elegant addition to patios and entrances.

■ [rowenandwren.co.uk](#)

TOP: Classic and romantic, Fermob's 1900 collection was inspired by the chic Parisian-style furniture favoured throughout the last century. Available in 24 colours, the 1900 Swing chair is an extravagant and playful

accessory the whole family will enjoy.

■ [classicwithatwist.com.au](#)

TOP RIGHT: Utilise every nook and cranny of your outdoor space with IKEA's collection of storage benches. The Applaro range takes the balcony bench to grand new heights, with boxes, utility hooks and shelves making for cosy, stylish and functional furniture.

■ [ikea.com/au](#)

RIGHT: Breathe new life into alfresco dining with simple and sleek furniture. The contemporary, clean lines of Tribù's Illum table complemented by the collection's Scandinavian-style curved chairs epitomise this modern trend.

■ [gomodern.co.uk](#)





TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Every green thumb needs these gardening essentials.

ABOVE: Sharing the fruits of your labour with family and friends is a must. Make sure your loved ones don't forget your good deed with this cute, eco-friendly stamp.

■ [hunterandcodesigns.etsy.com](#)

BELLOW: Exceptional design and craftsmanship has led to the ultimate Australian-produced luxe leather hose range. Envisioned by design duo Christo Everingham



and his wife, German brand designer Johanna Everingham, the Gardenlust hose collection introduces a glamorous new edge to this humble garden necessity.

■ [lepaar.com](#)

ABOVE: One of the brand's most-coveted lines, Sophie Allport's Gardening collection

has us swooning. The designer's trademark quirky illustrations are out in full force for this range, with charming garden prints and a mint-green palette adorning each accessory.

■ [sophieallport.com](#)

BELLOW LEFT: With seeds, scoops, flower clippers, gloves and watering

cans aplenty, Annabel James' Gorgeous Gardener collection is ideal for those seeking practical and pretty garden tools.

■ [annabeljames.co.uk](#)

BELLOW: Ensure those garden tools stay in tip-top shape by storing them in the Optima Wonder outdoor cabinet. Boasting ample space and protection against rainwater and UV rays, even the most avid of green thumbs will be satisfied with this storage solution.

■ [outstore.com.au](#)



SEED SAVERS

BURGON & BALL
BRITISH DESIGN
CLASSIC TOOLS



THE FINISHING TOUCH

Transform your garden into a chic outdoor space with these finishing touches.



ABOVE: We're currently coveting Basil Bang's Shrubbery umbrella, a new addition designed exclusively for the brand by artist Jonathan Zawada.

■ basilbangs.com

LEFT: Add some steel with style to your outdoor space with a charming piece from designer Lisa Sarah. Durable and eco-friendly, the Hello Lovely artwork is ideal.

■ lisasarah.com

ABOVE RIGHT: Point visitors in the right direction with these quirky wooden arrows.

■ tch.net

BELow: Feeling fruity? We adore this Watermelon doormat, bound to brighten every entrance.

■ downtthatlittlelane.com.au



RIGHT: A splash of paint lends originality to outdoor furniture. Annie Sloan's Chalk paint is perfect for transforming outdoor furniture into fun, sturdy pieces. Let your inner artist shine through with just a piece of chalk.

■ anniesloan.com



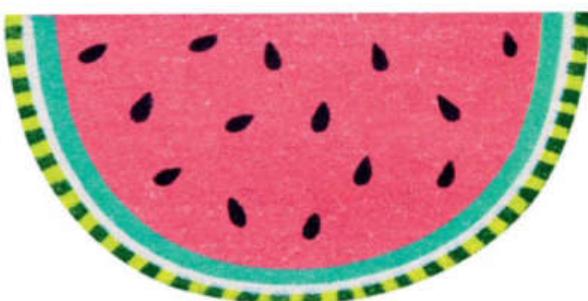
ABOVE: Bridge the gap between inside and out with floor tiles. We love Original Style's geometric Victorian tile range, which lends warmth and character to this outdoor room.

■ originalstyle.com

RIGHT: A collaboration between leading retailer The Rug Collection and TV

personality Jamie Durie has led to Transterior, a collection of striking outdoor rugs. Featuring five patterns in a range of vibrant shades, these rugs are designed to dress exteriors as comfortably and smartly as their indoor counterparts.

■ therugcollection.com.au



BELOW: Keep your garden rock solid with JG Cobblestones. The latest collection is perfect for entrances, driveways and garden paths, and enables you to build a solid foundation for outdoor designs to flourish.

cobblestones.com.au



BRING THE OUTDOORS IN

A love of gardening knows no bounds. Our favourite garden-inspired accessories are perfect for both outside and in.

RIGHT: Hang loose with this bright stone pot and macramé hanger.

■ [zigzapstudios.etsy.com](https://www.zigzapstudios.etsy.com)
FAR RIGHT: Geometric shapes and terrariums go hand in hand to create this striking garden pot.

■ [waen.etsy.com](https://www.waen.etsy.com)

BELOW: Stay on-trend this spring with this Orchard Flower headband.

■ [kisforkani.etsy.com](https://www.kisforkani.etsy.com)



ABOVE: Get to know your herbs and spices with this informative, illustrated print from Etsy.

■ [lucileskitchen.etsy.com](https://www.lucileskitchen.etsy.com)

RIGHT: It will be spring year-round in your home with this sweet floral wallpaper from Milton & King's latest collection.

■ [miltonandking.com](https://www.miltonandking.com)

LEFT: A whimsical feel and delicate wildflower illustrations make this gift card shine.

■ [lisamajdesigns.etsy.com](https://www.lisamajdesigns.etsy.com)



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Early records of leeks' use in ancient Egypt, the Middle East and Europe have been found, but no country has embraced the vegetable quite as much as the Welsh. For them a national symbol, along with the daffodil, its significance is represented in celebrations on St David's Day — in his time in the Middle Ages, the leek attained mystical status.

It may have all begun in 640 AD, when the Briton King Cadwallader and his men were engaged in battle with invading Saxons in a leek field. As an identifying badge, the Welsh wore leeks on their hats ... the unified side was victorious. Even today, the Welsh Guards continue to use the leek as their symbol, with a green-and-white plume displayed on their bearskin hats representing it. Rich in vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants, the leek is also recognised as being beneficial for vascular and blood health, particularly type 2 diabetes. A member of the genus Allium, the leek is closely related to onions and garlic, its bulbless structure defining it. The vegetable is a long cylinder of bundled leaf sheaths, blanched white in the lower part from the process of trenching, which is the stacking of soil around the growing plant.

To shred or chop a leek, take account of its structure for the most successful result. To cut long julienne strips, make a lengthways cut and peel off individual layers, flattening them into a pile of three or four on a clean workspace. This job is particularly easy if using a Japanese green onion cutter, a small tool with about seven short, sharp blades attached at one end. Cutting down the length of the leek results in perfectly proportioned leek strips. Check the gadgets section of any Japanese or Asian supermarket for this handy device. A sharp knife is your other option. To dice a leek, cut it in half lengthways and then cut each half lengthways again into two or four strips, depending on the size of dice you would like. Then cut across the leek for instant dice.

The layers can also be used to wrap food. Make a cannelloni of leek filled with chicken tenderloin and wrapped in prosciutto, then baked. Cooled and sliced, this is an easy appetiser or addition to a salad. Be aware that long, thick slices of leek can be particularly difficult to chew, as the fibre is difficult to break down.

SELECTION AND STORAGE: Preparation

of the leek for cooking always involves washing, as soil can work into the upper layers. Removal of the dark green part and base roots and a soak in cold water is usually sufficient. More recently, packaged leeks have been appearing in supermarkets, the cleaning and trimming already done. Not as satisfying as a market basket with the symmetrical shape of a leek or two popping out, but perhaps practical for apartment dwellers and those with restricted waste disposal. Nothing, however, beats the crispness of a freshly picked, intact leek.

The dark green top does not have to be entirely discarded. It is useful as a flavour boost in stocks and, very finely sliced, is a lovely addition to stews or even boiled with potatoes. Store leeks in the refrigerator, trimmed just enough to fit. Pre-trimmed leeks need to be kept in their packaging or a plastic bag, to prevent them drying out.

LEEK GOES WITH: Potatoes, mushrooms, salmon, prawns, white fish, blue cheese, chèvre, cheddar, butter, pepper, hazelnuts, walnuts, caraway, chorizo and prosciutto, chicken and red meats.

LEEEKS

A GENTLE ONION,
THE LEEK HAS BEEN
RECOGNISED FOR
MILLENNIA AS A
FOOD OF WORTH.

*Recipes & styling by Kay Francis,
photography Ken Brass*





White Fish with Leek & Mushroom in Dashi Broth

Serves 6

2 leeks; one finely diced, one julienned
6 fresh porcini mushrooms, thinly sliced
3-4 large fillets of white fish, skinned
(mahi mahi, blue eye cod, snapper)

500ml peanut oil

DASHI BROTH

6g bonito flakes
80g kombu seaweed
2 tablespoons light soy sauce
4 teaspoons sake
2 teaspoons mirin (sweet cooking sake)

In a large bowl, combine diced leek and sliced mushrooms. Slice the fish into 6mm-wide strips and add to leek and mushroom mixture.

To make broth, combine bonito in a large saucepan with 2 litres water. Stand for 15 minutes then add remaining ingredients. Bring to the boil, uncovered, then reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes. Strain into a clean pot. Discard solids. Warm oven to lowest temperature and place in serving plates to heat through. Heat peanut oil in a deep pot. Fry julienned leek, in batches, for 1 minute. Remove and place on a tray lined with kitchen paper. Keep warm in oven. Heat broth until simmering. Add leek, mushroom and fish, and poach until fish is just opaque, about 4-5 minutes. Remove from heat and spoon into warmed bowl. Serve garnished with fried leek.

Tiny Leek, Blue Cheese & Hazelnut Tarts Makes 24

PASTRY

100g hazelnuts, roasted

1 cup plain flour

90g cold salted butter

2 egg yolks

2 tablespoons sour cream

BLUE CHEESE FILLING

2 small leeks

3 eggs

225g English Shropshire blue cheese
(or other blue-vein cheese)

1 tablespoon hazelnut oil

and roll into a log. Roll in plastic wrap, flatten and refrigerate for 20 minutes.

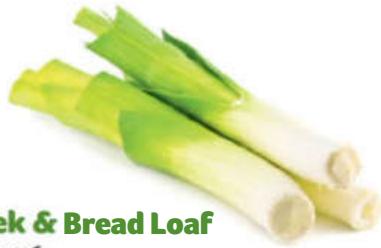
Preheat oven to 190°C (180°C fan forced). For the filling, slice leeks into 24 x 3mm-thick rounds. Chop remaining leek and any trim from the slices coarsely, place in food processor and process to a fine paste. Add eggs and cheese and work until smooth.

Brush two 12-hole (2 tablespoon capacity) muffin trays with hazelnut oil. Unwrap pastry and shape into a long roll, then cut into 24 pieces. Press each into the base of the muffin holes. Spoon in filling and top each with a slice of leek. Brush leek lightly with hazelnut oil. Bake for 30 minutes until puffed and firm. Remove from oven, cool in tins. Using a small metal spatula, carefully lift out tarts. Serve at room temperature or reheated.



To make pastry, finely grind hazelnuts in food processor. Add flour and process, then add butter and process until well combined. Add yolks and sour cream and work until dough clings together. If necessary, add more sour cream. Turn onto work surface





Leek & Bread Loaf

Serves 6

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon sugar (molasses or dark brown)
- 1 firm (dry) chorizo sausage (about 125g)
- 300g leek
- 4 large eggs
- 150g chèvre
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 rye and caraway seed sourdough bread loaf (or plain sourdough) (See note)

Preheat oven to 180°C. Place a 6-cup (26cm x 9cm x 7cm) metal loaf tin over low heat (on stovetop) and add butter, brushing it onto the sides of the tin as it melts. Add sugar and stir with a wooden spoon until melted. Take care holding the tin as it will get hot. Remove from heat.

Cut chorizo in half lengthways and remove skin. Cut meat into a small dice and place in a frying pan. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until beginning to crisp. Remove from heat and stand pan on an angle so the fat drains to one side. Trim leeks and wash. Cut 12-14 (depending on the diameter of the leek) 6mm-thick slices from one and carefully arrange them in the base of the loaf tin. They need to be firmly packed, so you may have to remove rings from the leek slices if they are too large. Roughly chop remaining leek and any offcuts, then place in a food processor and work to a coarse paste. Add eggs and chèvre

and process until smooth. Add salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Cut 20 thin slices from loaf of sourdough (crusts intact). Pour leek mixture into a large shallow bowl and add sliced bread. Sprinkle prepared chorizo over leeks in loaf tin, then spoon a little of the leek mixture on top. Turn each slice of bread in leek mixture and then layer on top of chorizo in tin, pressing down and packing neatly. Continue until all bread is used. Spread remaining leek mixture on top. Cover loosely with a tent of aluminium foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove foil and bake a further 30 minutes. Remove from oven and stand 20 minutes before turning out onto a serving plate or board. Serve warm or cold, sliced, with salad.

Note: I used a 490g unsliced rye and caraway seed loaf from the supermarket. If using plain sourdough, sprinkle 1 teaspoon caraway seeds into the leek and egg mixture.





Leek & Salmon Ravioli

Serves 3-4

- 2 leeks
- 200g fresh salmon, skinned
- 275g packet gow gee pastry rounds (30 pieces)
- 1 egg yolk, beaten with a pinch of salt
- 1 tablespoon dried pink peppercorns, lightly crushed
- 125g salted butter
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 50g salmon caviar, for garnish

Trim and wash leeks. Finely dice half of one leek and julienne the remainder. Place the dice in a bowl and julienne in a colander. Dice salmon into 6mm pieces and combine with diced leek. Spread 15 gow gee wrappers on work surface and brush with beaten



egg yolk. Place one tablespoonful of the leek and salmon in the centre of each wrapper, keeping the edges clean. Position another wrapper on top of filling, pressing well around the edges with the tines of a fork to seal. At this stage, the ravioli can be refrigerated or frozen until required. Place them in a single layer on a tray lined with baking paper. Separate layers with baking paper and cover all with plastic wrap.

Place crushed pink peppercorns in a large, deep frying pan. Heat until aromatic, then add butter, stirring until dissolved and beginning to sizzle.

Add lemon juice and turn off heat.

To cook ravioli, heat a large pot of water until simmering. Drop in julienne leek and cook 2 minutes. Remove with tongs and return to colander. Cook ravioli in small batches in the same water. Drop them into the pot and cook for 2 minutes after they rise to the surface. Remove with a slotted spoon and transfer to peppered butter mixture in pan. Turn to coat with butter. Repeat with remaining batches. Serve as an entrée garnished with poached leek and wild salmon caviar.

Note: You can also use a 270g pack (40 pieces) of square Shanghai wonton wrappers. Reduce the amount of filling in each one slightly or make a little more. 

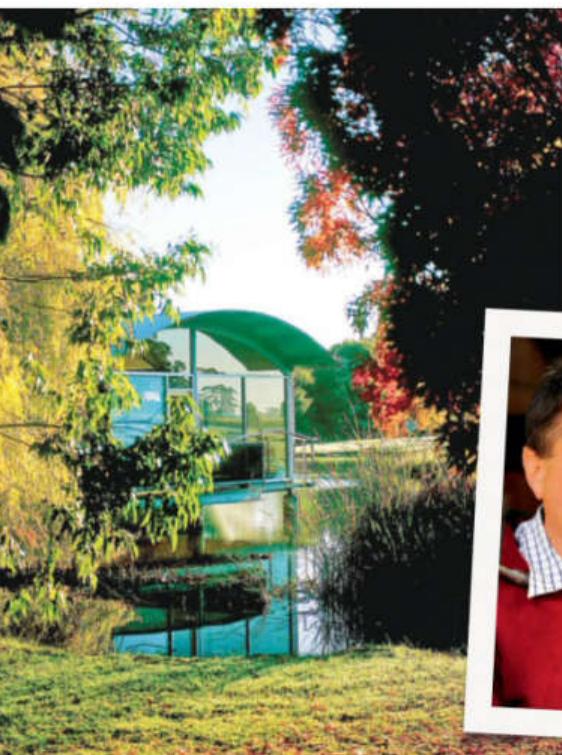
RAISING THE BAR

HERE ARE THE LATEST DROPS, NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE WORLD OF BEER, WINE AND SPIRITS. *By Greg Duncan Powell*

FOR CONSISTENCY

BALNAVES OF COONAWARRA

Consistency is a quality that is highly valued in racehorses but is not usually bragged about on wine labels. Yet it is one of the things that matters most to a wine buyer — even if they



don't know it. Most wine drinkers don't keep track of the weather events in Australia's wine regions, and the year on the label is neither here nor there, as long as the wine is good. That's consistency, and when it's not there, it can mean the death of a brand. Balnaves of Coonawarra manages great dependability year by year in Coonawarra, a cool-climate region famous for changeable weather. Experience helps, and this year, Balnaves celebrates 25 vintages. Winemaker Pete Bissell has been there for 20 of them and has seen his fair share of less-than-perfect vintages, so he knows how to smooth out the lumps and bumps nature and meteorology provide. The current Balnaves range is full of great



wines from a range of vintages: Balnaves Chardonnay 2013, \$30, is a very stylish drop; The Blend 2013, \$19, a complete bargain; Cabernet Merlot 2011, \$28, an amazing effort from a troublesome year; and The Tally 2010, \$90, represents what a Coonawarra Cabernet of five years' age should taste like.

FOR THE INQUISITIVE

FOX GORDON PRINCESS

FIANO 2014, \$22

Fiano is a white grape variety from southern Italy, which has found home in Australian dirt. There is a burgeoning range of home-grown Fianos and this is one of the best. Intriguing herbal and floral nuances lead to hints of honey and Beurre Bosc pears. It's a stylish white and goes very nicely with Asian-styled prawn dishes.



FOR THE BUDGET

STORM LIGHT, \$22.99 PER CASE AT ALDI STORES

This humbly priced supermarket brew won a bronze medal at the recent International Beer Awards against some much more famous (and expensive) competition. It ticks all the boxes expected from a "light" — it's inoffensive, quaffable and nicely bittered.

FOR CELEBRATING

MR RIGGS BATTLE AXE SPARKLING SHIRAZ NV, \$24

Try celebrating with a fizzy red instead of a fizzy white. Winemaker Ben Riggs cheekily named this sparkling red after his mother-in-law — who apparently is not a battle axe at all. It has the bubble and froth expected of a celebratory wine except it's red. It's Shiraz, it's bursting with flavour and it goes very nicely with pork canapés.



DID YOU KNOW?

SPARKLING RED IS AN AUSTRALIAN INVENTION, ALBEIT VIA SOME FRENCH INFLUENCE. RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT THE FIRST CREATOR OF THIS UNIQUE DROP WAS A FRENCH WINEMAKER BY THE NAME OF EDMOND MAZURE. EDMOND LANDED IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA WITH A VINEYARD FULL OF SHIRAZ AND, VOILÀ, THE WEIRD THING KNOWN AS SPARKLING BURGUNDY WAS BORN. THE YEAR WAS 1888.



Sympathetic Urban Renewal

harkawayhomes.com.au



CLASS ACT

BRUSH UP ON YOUR KITCHEN SKILLS WITH A COOK'S TOUR AROUND THE COUNTRY.

By Alice Griffin

Il Cacciatore Cooking School (NSW)

Northern Italian cuisine is the order of the day at Il Cacciatore, Hermitage Lodge's award-winning restaurant and cooking school in the stunning Hunter Valley region. Olive oil, Parmesan, balsamic vinegar, Barolo and Chianti wines are embraced with gusto as participants get flash with flour, creating masterful pasta dishes with the friendly assistance of the restaurant's in-house chefs. Following an authentic Italian cooking class, groups sample the fruits of their labour during a two-course meal accompanied by the region's finest wines.

ilcacciatore.com.au

Relish Mama (Vic)

A lifelong dream to bring simple, social and diverse cooking classes to the masses became a reality for Nellie Kerrison when Melbourne's Relish Mama opened its doors to the public in 2009. Countless hands-on classes, shining media reviews and one published cookbook later, Relish Mama continues to hold its own as one of Melbourne's best cooking schools. Indeed, a passion for sharing her cooking prowess with participants big and small — the kids' classes are a program highlight — has led to life-changing success for Nellie.

relishmama.com.au

Salt Meats Cheese (NSW)

When it comes to cooking classes, this inner-city hotspot continues to reign supreme with its quirky industrial interiors, aisles packed with rare European ingredients and masterful foodie hosts. From mozzarella and ravioli-making to mastering regional Italian dishes, Salt Meats Cheese classes are diverse enough to strike any foodie's fancy. Be sure to book early to snag a class at this Sydney eatery, as its standout reputation ensures places disappear fast.

saltmeatscheese.com.au

Urban Provider's Cooking Passions School (WA)

A purpose-built kitchen overlooking a stunning Balinese-inspired garden is the home for Urban Provider's Cooking

Passions classes. This tranquil setting in Perth is the perfect cooking environment for participants of any skill set, with classes spanning from beginner to advanced. Even non-cooks are welcome at Cooking Passions, with those opting out able to enjoy a glass of wine poolside while surveying their friends' culinary adventure.

urbanprovider.com.au

Jacob's Creek Kitchen Garden Cooking Experiences (SA)

Jacob's Creek Estate's vineyard is rich in history, with breathtaking views and gourmet adventures aplenty in the sprawling hills of the Barossa Valley. The historic cottages of the estate play host to a series of kitchen garden cooking classes, with classes uncovering the gourmet secrets of the iconic wine producers. In addition to cooking and wine-matching, participants pick their favourite seasonal produce from the kitchen garden and create their own meal with the assistance of Jacob's Creek's finest chefs. Following an alfresco meal, the new cooks are free to roam the grounds and admire the beauty of the world-famous Jacob's Creek.

jacobs creek.com.au/visit-us/tours-experiences/

Foodie Trails (Vic)

Foodie Trails was created by two passionate sisters who were driven by the desire to share the history and flavours of Indian cuisine with Melbourne locals. A walking-tour-meets-cooking-class, Foodie Trails offers participants the opportunity to wander Melbourne's streets and uncover the city's hidden gems of Indian culture and cuisine. Recently introducing Moroccan and African cuisine tours to its program, Foodie Trails continues to pick up steam as a cultural alternative for foodies seeking more than the average cooking class.

foodietrails.com.au

 Let us know about your forthcoming classes by writing to us at Locked Bag 154, North Ryde NSW 1670 or emailing australiancountry@universalmagazines.com.au.

ABOVE:

Sweet treats at Urban Provider's Cooking Passions School.





**CLOCKWISE
FROM LEFT:**

Lunch during the Foodie Trails Masala trail; a dessert of gulab jamun follows lunch at Foodie Trails; participants get their hands dirty at Jacob's Creek Kitchen Garden; picture-perfect chicken teriyaki at Relish Mama; bread is broken after a class at Relish Mama; wining and dining at Il Cacciatore; fun and games at Il Cacciatore; students perfect the art of pasta making at Salt Meats Cheese.



GHOULISH GOODIES

ANCIENT HALLOWEEN TRADITIONS
ARE REVIVED ON OCTOBER 31.

Photography Ken Brass, styling Sandra Hinton



OPPOSITE: The pre-Christian Celtic festival of the dead may be most commonly associated with the US, but in recent years the tradition of honouring the souls of the dead with feasting and antics has enjoyed a renaissance all round the world. Children love dressing up in ghoulish costumes and performing tricks and japes in return for delicious treats, and so the Halloween party has become an October 31st event in neighbourhoods right across Australia.

ABOVE LEFT: Our bat biscuits began life by dipping marshmallows in melted chocolate and securing them to wings made by cutting round chocolate biscuits in half. White Choc Bit eyes completed the scary specimens.

ABOVE RIGHT: The tombstones for our dip were made by cutting out round-edged rectangles of basic savoury biscuit dough and piping RIP on them with Vegemite ... or you could use black icing on a sweet biscuit. We also created bat crackers by cutting pita bread with a bat cookie cutter and baking them in the oven until crispy.

LEFT: Cut out bat shapes from black cardboard and define the outline with glitter glue. Hang in the tree with liberal skeins of cobwebs available from party supply shops.







SETTING THE SCENE



ABOVE: Severed fingers began life as puff pastry rolled into logs, adorned with unskinned almonds for fingernails. Mark the wrinkles and knuckles by lightly pressing with a sharp knife and bake in a moderate oven until lightly browned and cooked through.

ABOVE RIGHT: Worm jellies, gingerbread skeletons and meringue bones add to the ghoulish goodie array. Lots of clever effects can be achieved with a piping bag and nozzles ranging from 1cm to a couple of millimetres wide.

RIGHT: We downloaded scary labels for the drink bottles from the internet and printed them out on white paper, which was then given a light watercolour wash. When the labels dried we glued them to the bottles.

FAR RIGHT: The tradition of serving food to placate the departed spirits and their masked impersonators dates from the Celtic Day of the Dead, and is perpetuated on the Christian All Saints' or All Hallows' Day. So All Hallows' Eve became Hallow Evening, which in turn became Halloween. Chocolate cupcakes decorated with chocolate icing and sprinkles, white mint eyes and licorice legs become spiders for the party table.



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PIPING UP

PERFORMING WITH THE PIPES AND DRUMS BAND IS AN HONOUR FOR STUDENTS AT THE SCOTS SCHOOL, BATHURST. *By Kirsty McKenzie*

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:
Stephanie leads the drum corps across the lush lawns at The Scots School in Bathurst; the school oval is transformed into a parade ground; keeping the beat requires practice and perseverance; students study complex musical arrangements.

As Stephanie Ferguson explains it, playing in a pipes and drums band is the musical equivalent of simultaneously patting your head and rubbing your stomach. The year 11 student from The Scots School in the NSW Central Tablelands city of Bathurst is her school's drum major, leading a team of 21 snare, tenor and base drummers and performing with 16 pipers. Together, they walk, march and execute complex drill manoeuvres while playing their instruments from memory.

"On top of all our music practice we have drill sessions once a fortnight," Stephanie explains. "Good coordination helps, but there's no way other than hard work to get playing

and marching down pat. The size of the challenge multiplies when we join massed bands during tattoos and highland gatherings. Then there can be up to 1000 pipers and drummers on the field performing together."

Next year marks the 60th anniversary of the Pipes and Drums band for the school, which was established in 1942 when The Scots College in Sydney's Bellevue Hill evacuated its primary school students to Bathurst after the Japanese submarines entered Sydney Harbour. Today, the school is co-ed and has 340 students from pre-kindergarten to year 12. About 80 of them are boarders, with the girls living in Galloway House and the boys in Bulkeley House. The school also has a Junior School campus at nearby Lithgow.

Membership of the Pipes and Drums band is open to all students from years seven to 12 and the major costs of instruments, kilts and tuition are covered by the band's fundraising activities, some of which include appearance fees at functions. "Pipers start training on a chanter and need to have memorised three tunes before they can graduate to the bagpipes," Stephanie explains. "This can take anything from



six months to two years and there's lots of practice involved. As well as weekly group rehearsals the musicians have an individual lesson each week. Plus they need to practise at home. I would say that I practise at least three hours a week. So it's a big commitment, but one that's totally worth it."

On top of all this, the band then performs at events all over the state and occasionally overseas. Most recently they travelled to Sydney to play at the General Assembly for the Presbyterian Church. As well as performing at school occasions such as speech day, formal cadet dinners and parades, and an annual highland jazz night, the band usually has a fortnightly external engagement and during term four, that ramps up to a weekly commitment. A highlight of the school's calendar is the annual Highland Gathering (school fair), when a two-storey castle is constructed on the main oval, Scottish stalls selling everything from shortbread to sporrans are set up, there's a pipe band competition, highland dancing display and a big barbecue throughout the day. This year's Highland Gathering chieftan was John MacKenzie, who came to the school as bandmaster





**CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:**

The contingent travels around Australia and New Zealand to perform at championships; students look the part dressed in traditional kilts; former bandmaster John Mackenzie leads the annual Highland Gathering with flair.

in 1979 and maintains a great interest in all the band's activities. John's son, Gilleion, succeeded him when he retired in 2002. Gill continues to lead the band and his children have also been active band members during their school years.

"Gill has tutored students who have gone on to complete in the Australian and World Championships for pipe bands and solo competitors," Scots enrolments and promotion officer Lynda Ireland explains. "He's not just a whizz musician. He's also very resourceful when it comes to maintaining the instruments. He's a dab hand at cannibalising three sets of

pipes and turning them into one functioning instrument."

Lynda adds that in 2008, in recognition of the contribution the MacKenzie family has made to the band, the band's uniform was updated to the MacKenzie Seaforth tartan. "Its first outing was when the band travelled to the World Championships in Glasgow," she says. "There's never any problem with the male students regarding their kilts as having to wear a skirt. It's something they do with pride. Everyone in the band has a huge commitment and love for what they do."

In 2016 the Scots School will celebrate its 70th anniversary of independence from Scots College, Sydney, as well as the band's 60th birthday. Plans are afoot for a celebratory dinner with entertainment from the Pipes and Drums. There's also talk of a massed band, with old boys and girls joining the present students for a huge celebratory fling.

"Lots of students keep playing in bands long after they've left school," Stephanie says. "I hope I can find a place in a band when I go to uni. Other students never really leave the band and keep coming back to coach up-and-coming players."

She adds that the band has already given her the highlight of her school career when, as a year eight student, she led the street parade at the New Zealand National Championships in Tauranga. "It's hard to describe how special that was," she recalls. "Being in the Pipes and Drums allows you to be an ambassador for the school. It also provides so many opportunities to develop leadership and organisational skills, not to mention build friendships. We are like a big family within the school community and I am so proud to have had the opportunity to work and learn with them." 





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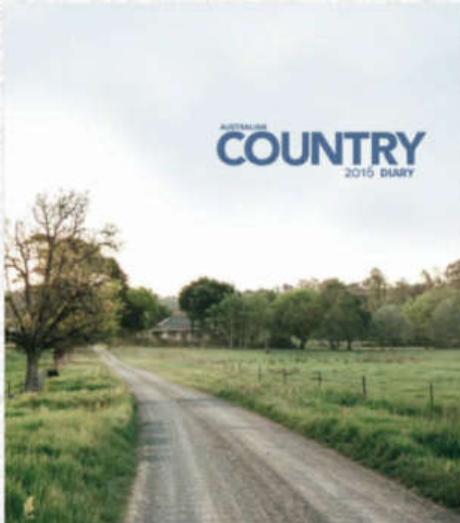
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— Samuel Butler

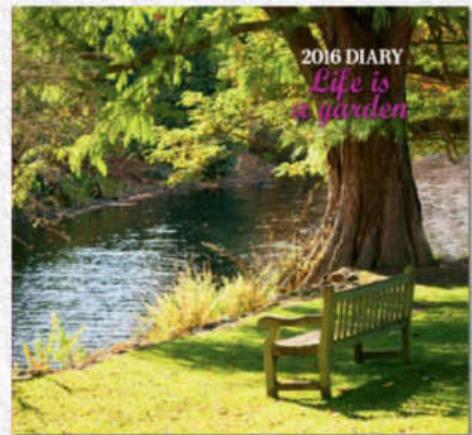
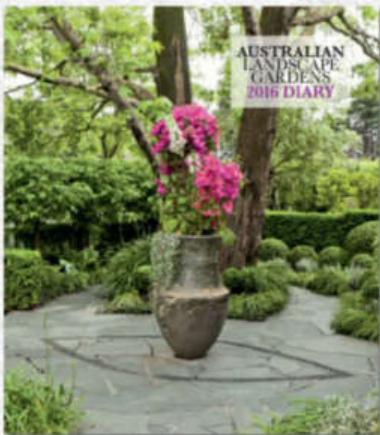


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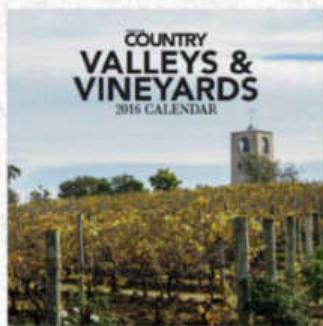
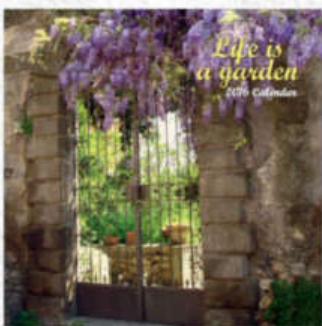
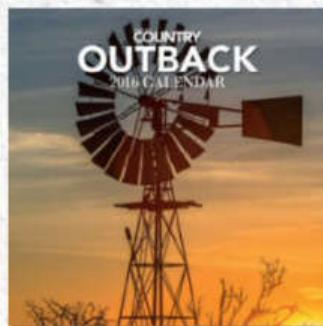
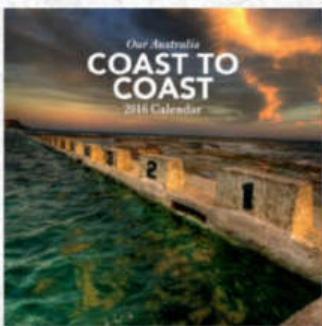
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PURE GOLD

LOMBARDY COTTAGE IN NEW ZEALAND'S
CENTRAL OTAGO IS A PERFECT HIDEAWAY,
AN IDEAL BASE FOR EXPLORING THE
UNUSUAL REGION ... OR BOTH.

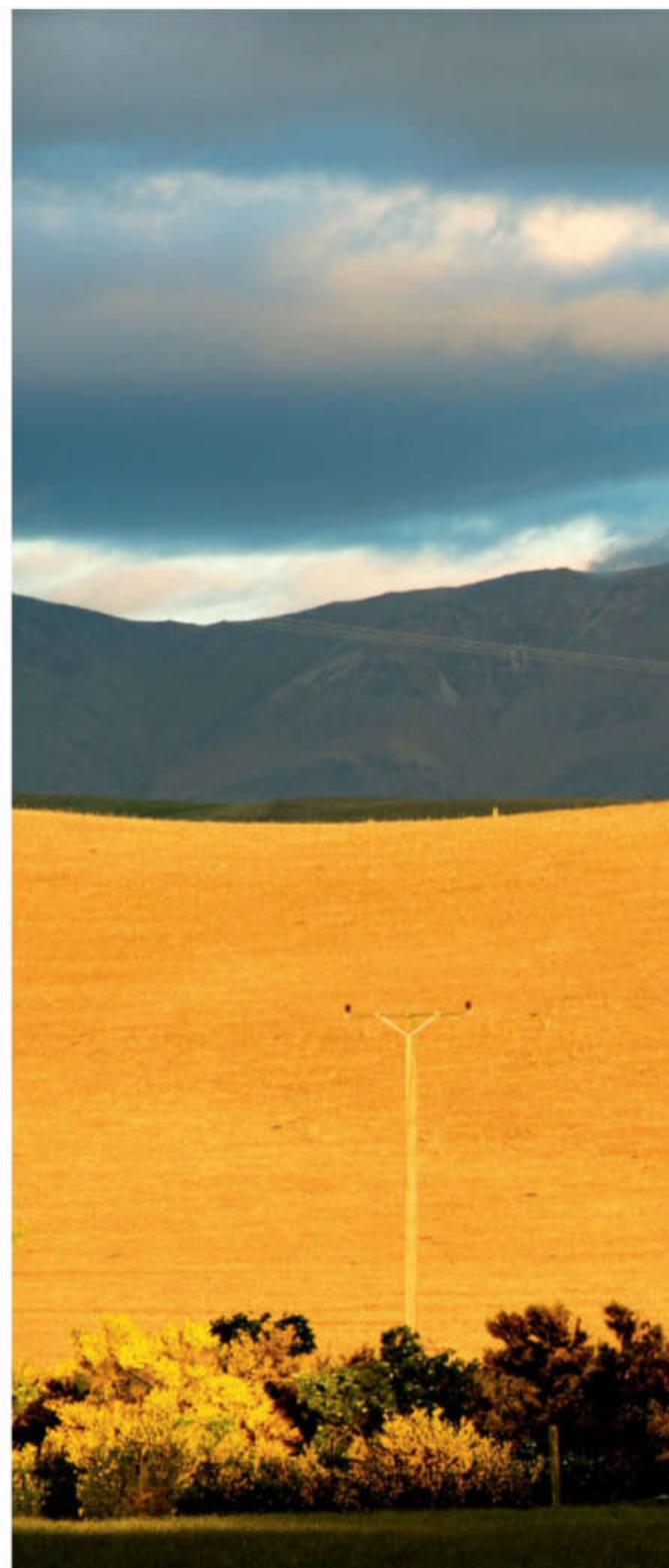
Story and photography by Don Fuchs



Don Fuchs called this charming old miner's cottage home during his stay in New Zealand's Central Otago. ➔



A coating of ice covers every single blade of the golden grass tussocks that eke out a living among shattered schist rock. The wind has a fierce penetrating bite. Grey clouds are flying across the sky. Their shadows are rushing, as in a time-lapse video, over the ridges, peaks and steep slopes of the Hawkdun Range. Even when the sun throws its fleeting spotlight onto you there is no warmth. And yet, being up here, exposed, vulnerable, and reluctant to move too far away from the warm Range Rover, is an invigorating experience. One that, in a sense,





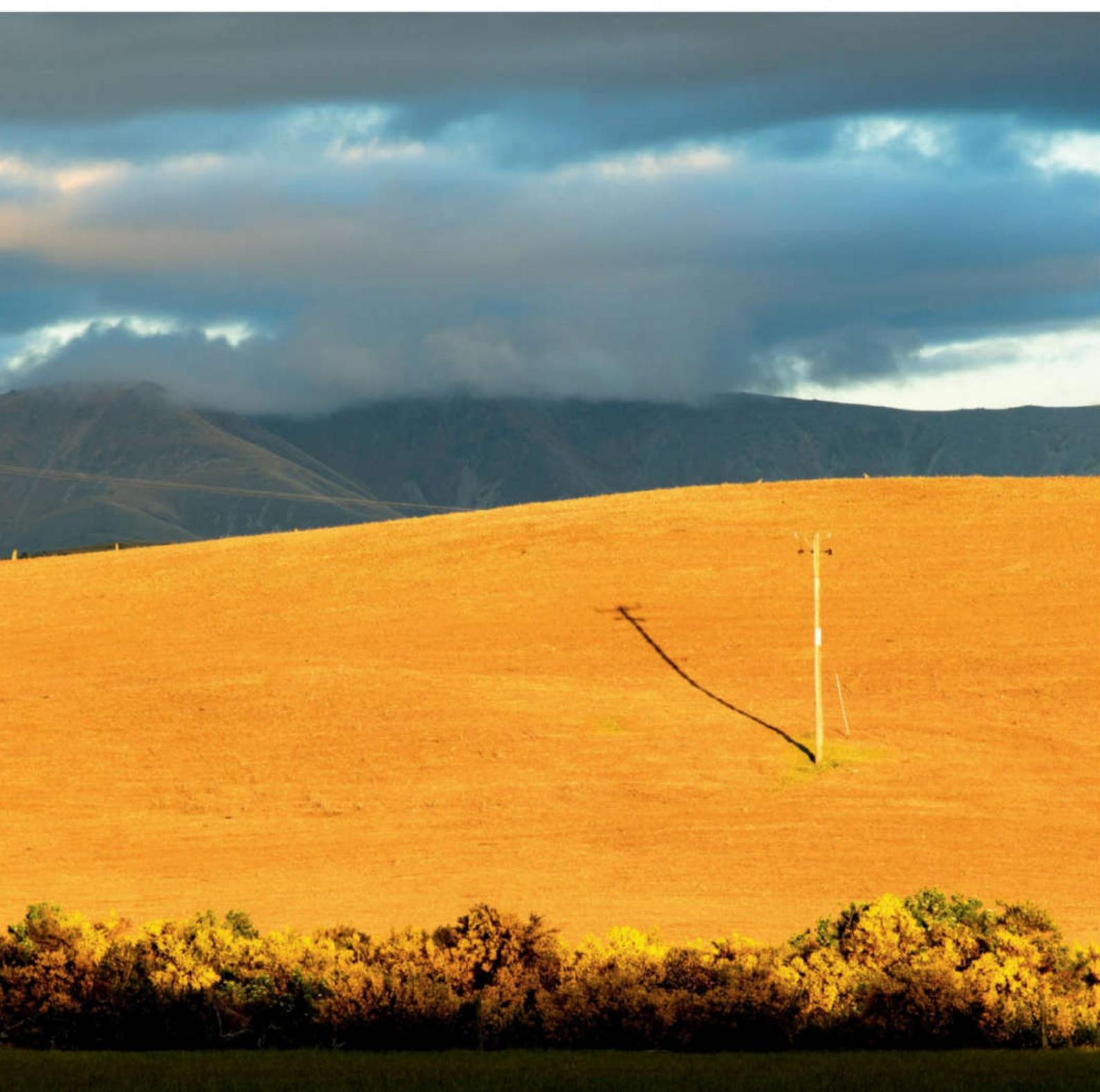
highlights what is waiting below the mountains: an old miner's cottage built of local stone, hidden in a valley off a valley. A lupin-framed creek murmuring through knee-deep meadows. Soft warm light falling out of windows at dusk. A free-standing bathtub filled with steaming water. Wind ruffling poplar and oak tree branches. A vegie garden with lettuce, rhubarb, carrots, herbs. A warm, cosy and stylish interior. Copses of birch trees. Total seclusion. Poppies, peonies, pansies. Very, very comfortable beds. Splendid isolation ... from the exposed

mountain ridges to the protected domain of the cottage, the contrast couldn't be bigger.

I'm talking about Lombardy Cottage and it should come with a warning: do not go there alone. It's simply too beautiful not to be shared with someone you are close to. It's located in the most unlikely of places: Central Otago, New Zealand. Go through all the famous landscapes the small but mind-blowingly diverse nation has to offer, and you'll find that Central Otago isn't one of them. Google the map of Central Otago district and it will become clear that everything with a big name on the South Island is

**CLOCKWISE
FROM BELOW:**

Central Otago's striking landscape inspires travellers; local offerings at St Bathans; visitors enjoy the spectacular diversity of the region; the local church reflects the rich history of the old mining town.



**CLOCKWISE
FROM BELOW:**

Grazing sheep enjoy the view; locals claim that gold remains in the Lombardy Cottage creek; the region's steep mountains add to a stunning landscape.

somewhere else. Queenstown, thrill-seeker capital of NZ, is close however. This is where the journey begins — after an incredible last few minutes on the Air New Zealand plane, coming in low over the mountains of the Crown Range, followed by a runway approach along the Kawarau River valley with the bordering hills higher than the plane. Thrown in are views to the jagged outline of The Remarkables. There are very few airports in the world that offer such a dramatic approach. From the airport it is east, not west

to Queenstown itself, or north towards Wanaka, or south towards Southland. The fixtures on the road to the hidden cottage are Cromwell, Clyde, Omakau and Becks. Then it gets even more obscure: off the Wedderburn–Becks Road, north towards Saint Bathans, population five. But, not all the way there. The cottage is off the already minor main road, off the secondary road and then along a narrow dirt track.

Birds sing, wind rustles in trees. The cottage is set in an oasis. It has to be said though that as far as Central Otago is concerned, the beautiful gardens that surround the cottage are a little misleading in their summer lushness. Central Otago is rain shadow country. It lies east of the jagged, snow-capped peaks of the New Zealand Alps. These high mountains greedily force the moisture out of the clouds, keep it for themselves and don't leave much for the land beyond. It is a fascinating landscape, a timeless land, with its sparseness and harshness appealing to painters and photographers. Mostly treeless and monochrome, it has a strange allure. And a powerful history you cannot escape wherever you go: gold.

It is unlikely that you'll ever suffer from cabin fever at Lombardy. But if you do become curious about the outside world, start exploring. Saint Bathans, just a few kilometres from the cottage, is one of the most authentic mining towns in New Zealand, with a great pub, the Vulcan Hotel,







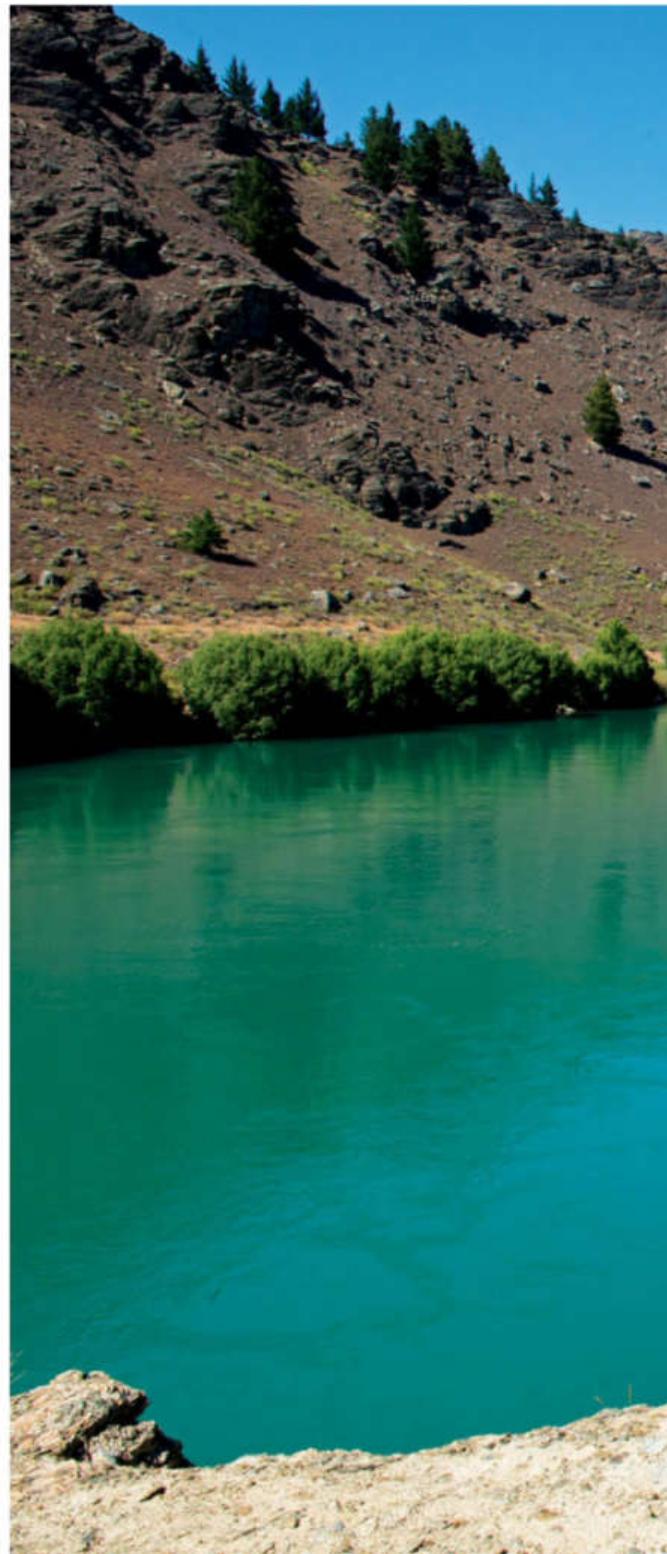
**CLOCKWISE
FROM RIGHT:**

A cosy corner at Lombardy Cottage; the miner's cottage boasts warm interiors with old-world charm; the Lake Roxburgh Bike Trail offers an adventurous way to explore the region.



where the locals gather every Friday for a meal and a yarn, original miners' cottages lovingly restored, an old church with headstones under the spread wings of an old horse chestnut tree and the gold-buying office of the Bank of New South Wales. Nearby is a big hole, created in search of the precious metal. It is now partly filled with water forming the Blue Lake.

In the shed at Lombardy are mountain bikes so your outing to Saint Bathans could be a slightly energetic one. Just to test the water, because my next suggestion is a little bit more strenuous: the Lake Roxburgh Bike Trail. Don't get me wrong, you don't have to do all these outdoor adventures. You might





be entirely happy to shack up in the cottage, cook your own meals, have an occasional sun-downer in the shepherd's hut at the lower end of the property, wander through the gardens in the late evening (the sun doesn't set until almost 10pm in summer so far to the south), soak in the bath tub, never leave the property, and let the world outside be. If you do venture outside however, you will quickly realise that Central Otago, New Zealand's outback, has much to offer. And after every outing you return to your cosy nest. Occasionally leaving Lombardy highlights even more what it has to offer.

The Lake Roxburgh Bike Trail is a relatively new track and

one of the best mountain bike day trips anywhere. Especially when you opt for the luxury version offered by Bike It Now!, based in the village of Clyde. The package includes hire of top-end bikes, transfer from Clyde to Alexandra, packed gourmet lunch, booked speedboat (more on that later), a drink at the end of the trail in Roxburgh and transfer back to Clyde. Bike It Now! takes the organising out of the outing and leaves you with pure pleasure, and a little bit of sweaty legwork.

The bike trail enters the deep valley of the Clutha River just on the outskirts of the little town of Alexandra. The turquoise waters of the river are lined with willows, contrasting with



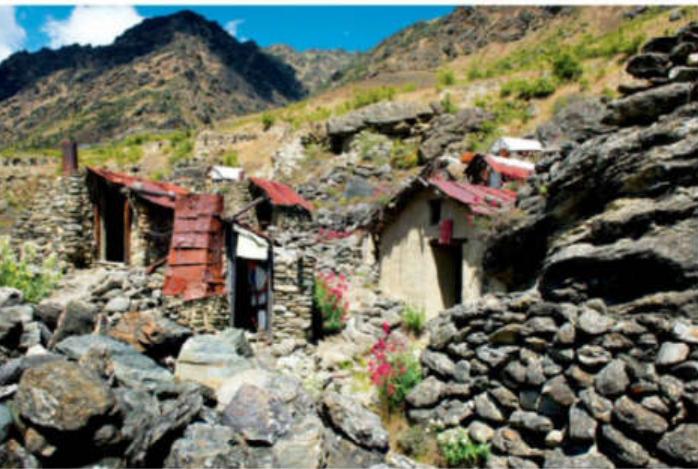
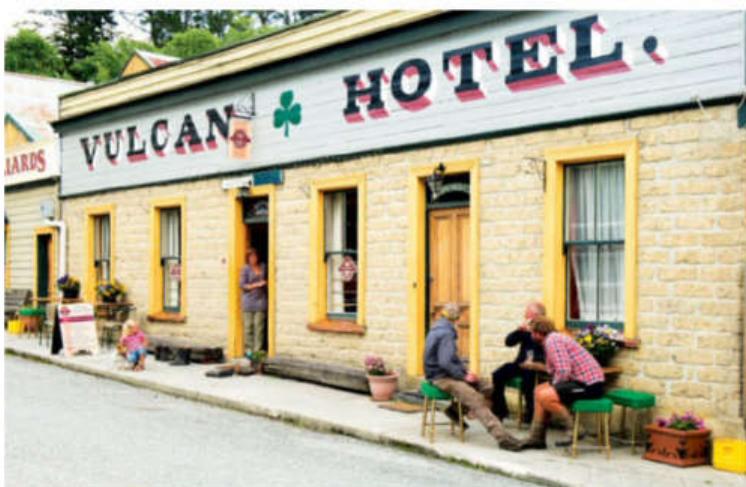
**CLOCKWISE
FROM OPPOSITE:**

The peaks of the New Zealand Alps surround the countryside; old miners' quarters still stand at the Goldfield Mining Centre; former miner Des enjoys a beer and a Sudoku at the Vulcan Hotel; the historic reserve in Kawarau Gorge gives insight into the nation's early history; locals gather every Friday at the Vulcan pub.

the dry slopes of the valley. If you time it right, these slopes take on a hue of purple when the wild thyme is blooming in early summer. Most of the first section of the bike trail is easy, with a few dramatic sections thrown in. After nine kilometres, the trail ends. This is where Laurence with his bike-rack-equipped jetboat is waiting. With the bikes securely stored, it is not off to a thrilling jetboat ride through the gorge yet, as you might suspect, but across the river to an old gold mine. An improvised lunch spot under weeping willows and a stroll through the remnants of the diggings are the precursor for a fast and exhilarating run down the river, to the start of the second leg of the bike track. This boat ride is necessary as a dispute with a landowner has so far prohibited the

continuation of the bike trail through the middle section of the gorge. What dedicated mountain bikers might see as a negative can be seen as positive; the wild boat ride through the gorge adds a different perspective, a good dose of spice and fun. And there is plenty of mountain biking to come. The last leg of the pedalling adventure has some grit in the form of lengthy uphill sections. But then, when it all gets a bit tiring, just think of the cottage!

Lombardy is equipped with a professional kitchen and, keeping the isolation of the cottage in mind, that is a good thing. Creating some gourmet fare with a companion can be quite enjoyable and there are a few cookbooks in the kitchen to offer inspiration. Outside, the vegie garden, at least during the summer months, has many offerings for aspiring cooks, all fresh, organic, tasty and healthy. Apart from that, you'll want to arrive with a carload of provisions at the cottage though as the next decent supermarket is a fair drive away. But there are options for culinary outings. The Vulcan Hotel in Saint Bathans is close by, offering old-world charm and decent food. Another historic gold-mining town, Ophir near Omakau, is a bit further down the road but the restaurant there at Pitches Store warrants the short drive for a dinner outing. Plus, the village itself with its old buildings is worth the visit. If a sumptuous lunch is your thing, you have to do two things: travel to Wild Earth Winery in the Kawarau Gorge near Cromwell, and decide who the designated driver back to the cottage will be. Whoever is appointed will have certainly picked the short straw and is making a big sacrifice ... the wines there are outstanding. And they



Central Otago lies east of the jagged, snow-capped peaks of the New Zealand Alps. These high mountains greedily force the moisture out of the clouds, keep it for themselves and don't leave much for the land beyond.





complement some creative dishes. Owner and wine maker Quentin Quider came up with his own way of cooking in old oak barrels that he transforms to barbecues. Here are some of his offerings: duck breast in licorice sauce, miso-glazed salmon, mini venison burgers with beetroot-chocolate sauce, braised goat with apricot barbecue sauce, beef bone marrow risotto with smoked abalone and truffle. As one of you will miss out on the wines, there is always the option to purchase some of them — try the Pinot Noir — to take back to the cottage for enjoyment later.

If you are ready for another adventurous outing, you have to go north, through Saint Bathans, and follow the unsealed stretch of the Loop Road to the main road and head to the town of Nasby. Surrounded by extensive pine forests — a strange, almost Canadian sight in otherwise treeless Central Otago — this historic town alone is worth the drive. Its existence is based on gold of course, but its more recent claim to fame is a vivid curling culture. There is even an indoor curling rink where visitors can give this strange sport a go. Curling, however, qualifies as an oddity not as an adventure. For that you'll have to meet Sam Inder. The farmer cum tour operator offers 4WD tours up into the Hawkduin Range protected within the Oteake Conservation Park. Sam brings you up to Buster Diggins, once the richest gold mine in the district. Now a bizarre sight with its almost white quartz gravel cliffs among high tussock plains, these diggings are another piece of Central Otago's gold-mining history. From there it gets higher still until the iced-in tussock grass is replaced by gray scree fields. Wind gusts shake the vehicle, the temperature is close to freezing. In the distance, under threatening grey clouds, loom rugged peaks. Then the white knuckle descent to Dunseys Pass Road begins. Otago's alpine wilderness stays behind when the remote outpost of civilisation, the rustic Dunseys Pass Hotel, is reached. After the harsh climate up in the Hawkduins, a meal and a beer there is pure pleasure. And if you are lucky, old Des Styles, in his younger years a gold miner, sits at the bar, with a beer and a Sudoku problem to solve in front of him.

You can't escape gold in this part of New Zealand. Not even at the cottage. Named after the many historic Lombardy poplars planted by the early miners, the cottage was built by mine manager Thomas Hughes in 1864. He was in charge of the Old Vinegar Hill Gold Mine just up the road.

While the gold rush is history in Central Otago, you



might come to the realisation, as I did, that with discovering Lombardy and Central Otago, you have struck gold anyway. You could be lucky in more ways than one. Get some gold-washing pans out of the shed and try your luck at Lombardy's little creek. It is said that there is still gold in there!

For more information visit lombardycottage.co.nz and centralotagonz.com.

Australian Country travelled with assistance from Air New Zealand, which has daily departures from all Australian capitals for Queenstown. For more information visit airnewzealand.com.au. 

**CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE:**

A former railway station, the Ida Railway Hut, still stands; buildings from years gone by have been lovingly restored and decorate the town's streets; golden grass tussocks withstand the harsh climate.

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Out & about

By Alice Griffin

THE MONARO COMMITTEE FOR CANCER RESEARCH'S FUNDRAISERS

The community of the Monaro region in southern NSW was recently treated to a social whirl in the name of a good cause. An event billed as Australia's highest high tea at Altitude 1260 Resort in the Crackenback Valley was the warm-up for *Strictly Musical*, three nights of musical entertainment and black-tie dinners.

Organised by the team at the Monaro Committee for Cancer Research, *Strictly Musical* featured six unique acts choreographed, designed, and performed by fearless volunteers. A total of 37 local first-time dancers took to the stage to perform iconic dance numbers from big-time productions including *Grease*, *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, *The Jersey Boys*, *Mamma Mia* and *Chicago*. The crowd of 1300 across the three shows cheered the stars through their dancing debuts, and their bravery and commitment to the cause were rewarded with the event raising a whopping \$217,000 for cancer services in the region.

Since its inception in 1996, the Monaro Committee for Cancer Research has been a vital asset to the community, assisting in the development of an oncology unit in Cooma, providing training for nurses and essential equipment, supporting local patients, and making significant contributions to cancer research projects. The funds raised from *Strictly Musical* and the high tea will assist the committee in further developing its incredible work.

For more information on how you can support Monaro Committee for Cancer Research, visit mccr.org.au.

 LET US KNOW ABOUT YOUR UPCOMING EVENT. EMAIL THE EDITOR, KIRSTY MCKENZIE ON KMCKENZIE@UNIVERSALMAGAZINES.COM.AU.

THIS PAGE:

Guests at Australia's highest high tea at Altitude 1260 Resort were treated to equal measures of cake and bubbles accompanied by fabulous music.

**THIS PAGE:**

The Monaro Committee for Cancer Research hosted *Strictly Musical*, three nights of great entertainment and black-tie dinners.





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TANNERS, OH MY! GEAR UP
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*Compiled by Alice Griffin
photography Ken Brass*



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The Little Alchemist Ultra
C Radiance serum, \$69,
thelittlealchemist.com.au



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philosophyskincare.com.au



Clinique Chubby Stick
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clinique.com.au





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The Fermob Plein Air side chair unites design and practicality to create the ultimate folding chair. With a steel frame, heat resistant material and 24 colours to choose from, this little chair is sure to make a big pop in your garden. ■ classicwithatwist.com.au



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Handmade in Ninh Binh Province, Vietnam, this basket elegantly fuses the practical with the beautiful. Woven from seagrass, it is a strong, durable alternative to plastic bags, and is collapsible for easy storage in space-limited homes. ■ oxfamshop.org.au



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■ adirondackchairsaustralia.com.au



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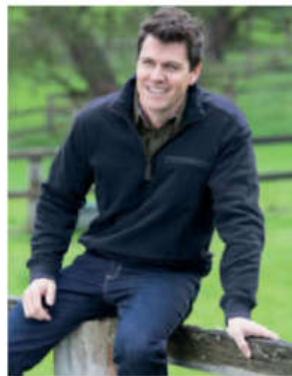
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■ austcastsigs.com.au

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■ maisonliving.com.au

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■ thomascook.com.au

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■ yealands.co.nz

**UNTOUCHED WORLD NEW ZEALAND**

The pioneering sustainable outfitter, Untouched World, has released a new collection of knits that blend comfort, style and sustainability. Our favourite is the Felted Fiord jacket which boasts unbeatable warmth and retails at \$669. ■ untouchedworld.com

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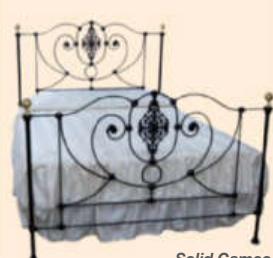
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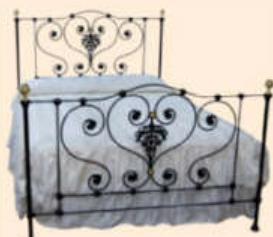
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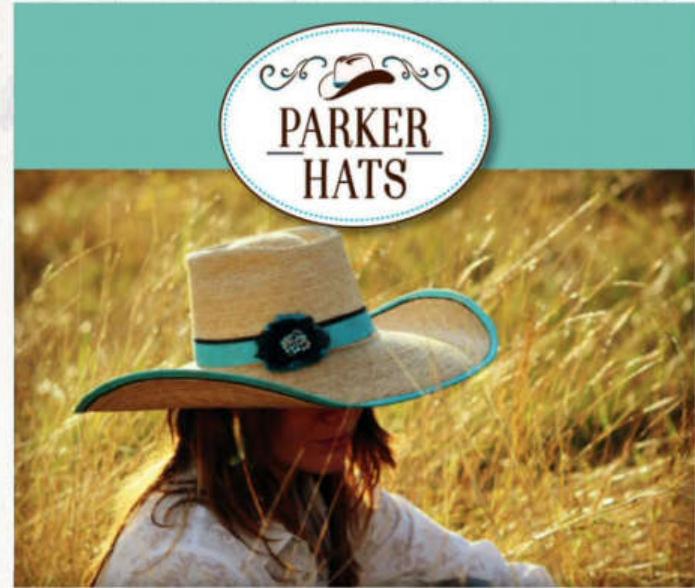
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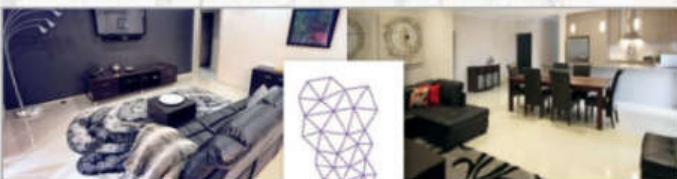
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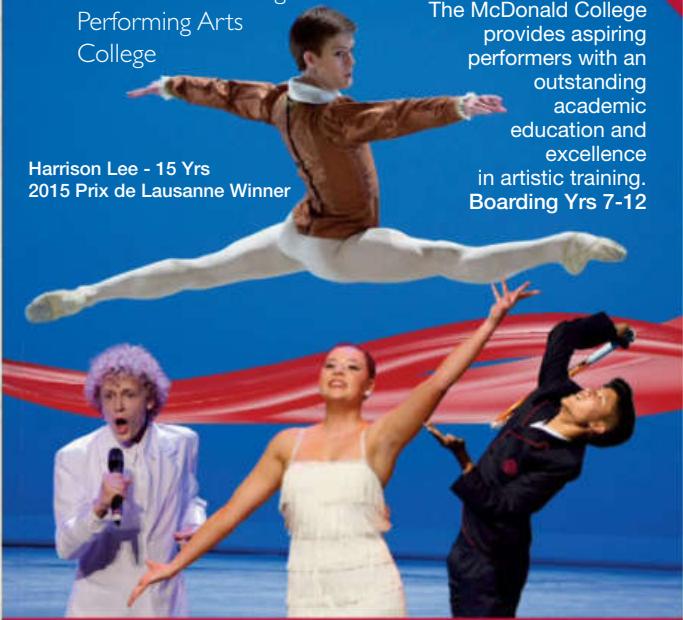
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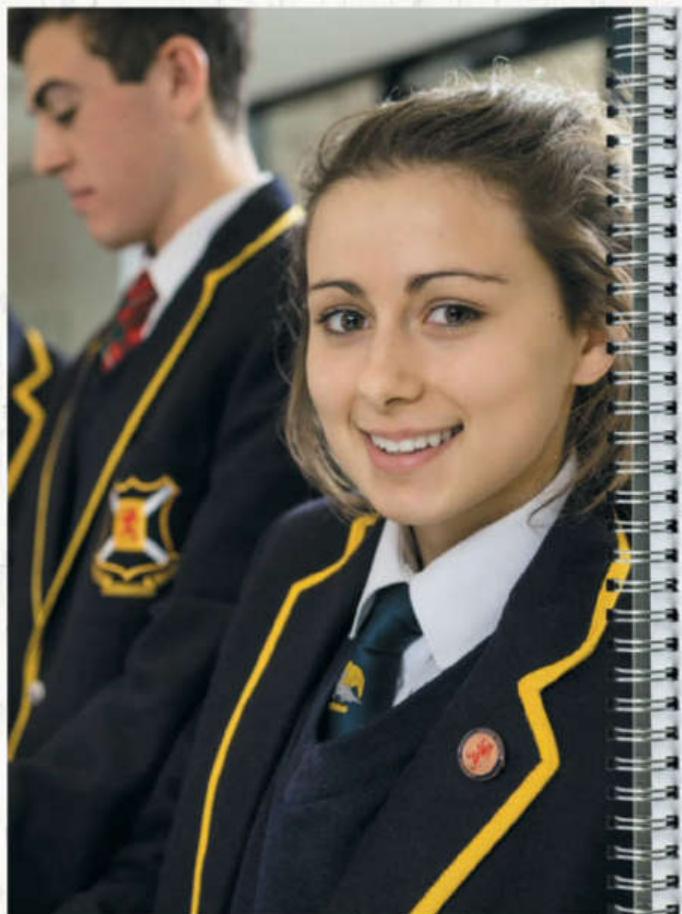
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An advertisement for St Ursula's College Toowoomba. At the top left is the college crest with the motto "SERVIAM". The main title "St Ursula's College" is in large blue letters, with "TOOWOOMBA" in smaller letters below it. Three female students in dark blue uniforms and hats are seated at a light blue wooden table outdoors, smiling at the camera. They are positioned in front of a large tree and colorful flowers. A QR code and the text "Take a virtual tour here!" are in the bottom right corner. The bottom left contains the text "A CATHOLIC DAY & BOARDING SCHOOL FOR GIRLS YEARS 7 - 12".

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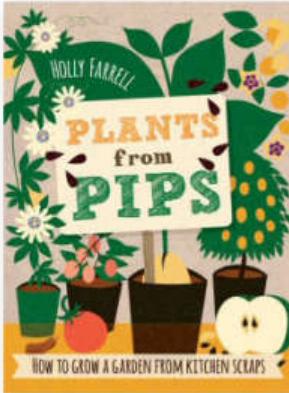


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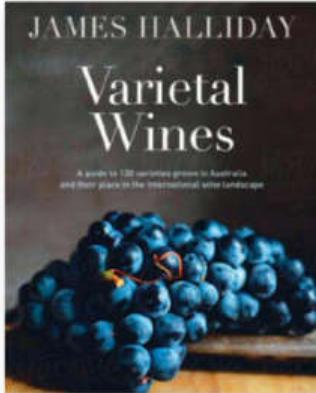
By Nina Harriott & Alice Griffin



PLANTS FROM PIPS

HOLLY FARRELL, ALLEN & UNWIN, \$19.99

In the words of ancient Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu, "To see things in the seed, that is genius." Guidebook *Plants from Pips* does just that, teaching readers to grow a garden from kitchen scraps. The perfect publication for first-time gardeners, *Plants from Pips* holds readers' hands through every stage of the planting process, covering the equipment, methods, and basic knowledge



necessary to evolve from novice gardener to green thumb in a few easy steps.

VARIETAL WINES

JAMES HALLIDAY, HARDIE GRANT, \$59.95

Varietal Wines is a must-have addition to the library of any wine devotee or restaurateur. Written by James Halliday, a leading authority in the Australian wine industry, the book provides an almost scientific analysis of the 130 grape

APRIL BLOOMFIELD



A GIRL AND HER GREENS

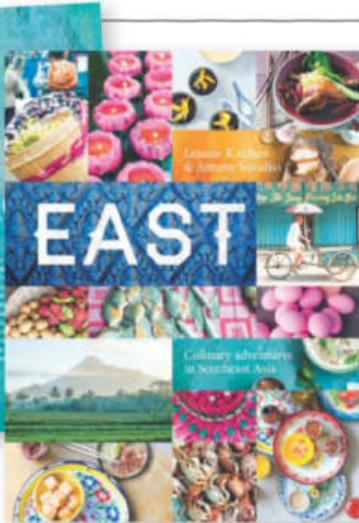
HEARTY MEALS FROM THE GARDEN

varieties grown in Australia, and traces the development of winemaking around the world. The compilation provides readers with the skills necessary to select the best wine for their taste, region and budget.

A GIRL AND HER GREENS: HEARTY MEALS FROM THE GARDEN

**APRIL BLOOMFIELD,
ALLEN & UNWIN, \$49.99**

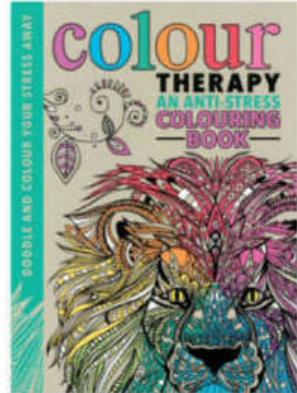
April Bloomfield, founder of New York restaurant The Spotted Pig, may be known for her nose-to-tail ethos, but her cookery prowess stretches further than her famous whole hog feasts. Bloomfield's latest cookbook offering, *A Girl and Her Greens*, brings vegetables to the centre stage, demonstrating how spuds and garden greens can hold their own along red meats' finest. From a working class existence in Birmingham, England, to New York's lauded restaurant scene, *A Girl and Her Greens* traces April's journey from its roots with fascinating personal spills from the chef accompanying a cache of delectable recipes.



EAST: CULINARY ADVENTURES IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

LEANNE KITCHEN & ANTONY SUVALKO, HARDIE GRANT, \$39.95

Following the success of *The Real Food of China*, experienced chefs Leanne Kitchen and Antony Suvalko have teamed up once again to create a stunning visual and culinary journey across Southeast Asia. Hundreds of recipes from Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia are accompanied by vivid photographs amassed across years of combined travel and research. Whether you're an addict of steamy Asian flavours or a newcomer looking for basic recipes, it's hard not to be seduced by the exotic flavours, scents and destinations explored in this book.



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THE LONG HOT SUMMER KATHLEEN MACMAHON, HACHETTE, \$29.99

humble coloured pencil. Avid drawers have long celebrated the therapeutic properties of art, and adult colouring-in books have recently achieved a cult following because of their association with mindfulness, meditation and relaxation. With seven colour collections and a multitude of quirky patterns, shapes and images, the *Anti-Stress Colouring Book* provides the perfect escape from the distractions of everyday life.

NAKED CAKES: SIMPLY BEAUTIFUL HANDMADE CREATIONS

**LYNDEL MILLER,
MURDOCH BOOKS, \$49.99**

Naked Cakes provides an elegant alternative for lazy bakers and time-poor hosts, and offers a modern contrast to the traditionalism of heavily iced cakes. Miller provides a wealth of baking tips, flavour combinations and step-by-step tips to help even the most basic baker to create beautiful centrepiece cakes. The compendium is the perfect companion for your next party, whether it be a baby shower, wedding or Mexican fiesta.

THE TOOHEYS BROTHERS COOKING HANDBOOK

EBURY AUSTRALIA, \$39.99

After close to 150 years of brewing, Tooheys has extended its reach into food and released a quintessentially Australian cookery handbook filled with simple recipes that hark back to hot Australian summers and feasts around the BBQ.



these larger-than-life individuals, readers can't help but fall in love with the dysfunctional bunch portayed in *The Long Hot Summer*.

SECRET KEEPING FOR BEGINNERS

MAGGIE ALDERSON, HARPERCOLLINS, \$29.95

For years English journalist Maggie Alderson kept us entertained with her wry and witty observations on the fashion industry via her column in *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Now she has returned to her hometown of London and has written six novels and edited several others. Her latest offering, *Secret Keeping for Beginners*, directs her trademark warm and amusing scrutiny to the complicated, intertwined lives and loves of three very different sisters, their Bohemian mother and

the secrets they are keeping from each other. Of course it all comes out in the end, but getting there is an enjoyable romp, which will keep readers entertained for the duration.

The book is relaxed, down to earth and filled with no-frills, home cooked recipes perfect for midweek meals with family and friends. Helpful tips and recipe alterations make this book the perfect addition to any Australian pantry.

THE CONSTANT RENOVATORS: RESTORING GRANDEUR

**MARIE AND DOMINIC ROMEO,
MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY
PUBLISHING, \$45.00**

This lavish coffee table book traces the work of the Romeos as they transform some of Australia's most impressive residences. Driven by a love of old buildings, a huge imagination and an almost superhuman knack for restoration, the couple has rescued many stately homes from slow deaths of neglect and decay. *The Constant Renovators* is an inspiring read for any homeowner or renovator.

MAILBAG

THANKS FOR BEING IN TOUCH. WE WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK.



Last issue generated lots of helpful feedback from our readers.

She'll be apples

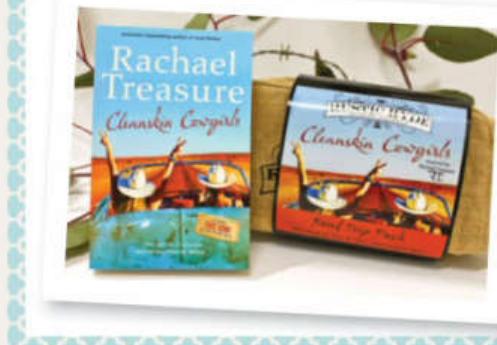
Whether it's a basketful of rosy apples, a bountiful harvest, fresh eggs from happy chooks, or just a bunch of fresh herbs from the garden, there's something special about being invited to share a meal around a country kitchen table. When I was a little girl I spent some holiday time with my cousins on my uncle's farm, and I remember lean times, when only a basket of husky corn and creamy homemade butter sat in the middle of the table. Other times a platter of bacon and eggs might appear, but for the most part, meals were simple, whatever the land offered up, and no one complained. That was life in the country and it came with other rewards, including spectacular views over a lush valley, a bubbling creek, and squeaky clean air. Thank you for the wonderful June/July issue. It was another reminder of this vast, often desolate, other times breathtakingly beautiful land we call country, and the folk from all walks of life who share around their kitchen tables and call it home.

Judith Caine, Donvale, Vic.

Restoration tale

Australian Country magazine gives me inspiration and works my creative juices to keep me doing more and more. I am writing to introduce our new renovation job on an original circa 1889 homestead. My husband, Peter Seppelt, a self-taught stonemason, has created our lovely estate through 35 years of love and hard work. He is fifth generation of the Seppelt family and has wine in his veins. Once Seppelts (the family empire) was sold in the early 1980s, Peter and his parents began restoring our current property. Jumping a few decades, Peter and I met in 2004 and we were married in 2007. Since we purchased the property from Peter's father, Karl, we have continued to redevelop, create, build, garden and landscape. I mix the concrete for Peter, and do

Thanks for being in touch. We welcome your feedback. We appreciate your thoughts and in each issue, one correspondent wins a prize. Simply email the team at australiancountry@universalmagazines.com.au or write to us at *Australian Country*, Locked Bag 154, North Ryde NSW 1670. We reserve the right to edit lengthy letters before publication. Our favourite correspondent next issue will win a road trip gift pack of toiletries from Rustic Hyde plus a signed copy of *Cleanskin Cowgirls* by celebrated Tasmanian author Rachael Treasure.



the garden and developing and together we have used our vision to turn it into a business hosting weddings. We had a lovely couple who asked if they could stay in the homestead so the girls were on site to dress and get ready. So we completely renovated three large bedrooms, a dressing room and lounge room and all the hallways. We worked day and night and finished off the day before they said "I do". If you wish to view our website this will give you a little insight about who we are and what we have created: peterseppeltwines.com.au

Roz Seppelt, Mt Pleasant, SA

Ed's note: Watch this space. We will be visiting Roz and Peter in the not-too-distant future.

Gulf correction

I happened to pick up the December 2014/January 2015 magazine and was reading with interest the *Tracks across the top* article. Having lived in Normanton for 46 years until moving over to the east coast, I would like to correct the information regarding the Carpentaria Shire Council building. The building in the story was not the Burns Philp premises. The original Burns Philp building was built on the adjoining block along Landsborough Street. The council chambers were completed in 1890, at a cost of £1000 pounds for the Carpentaria Divisional Board which was later called the Carpentaria Shire Council. The Burns Philp building is now the home for the Normanton Library and Visitors Information Centre.

Carol Henry, Mareeba, Qld



And the winner is ...

Judith Caine, of Donvale, Vic, who wins a fabulous pair of pearl earrings from Australian Pearl Divers.

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FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY WE'VE AGAIN TRAVELED ALL OVER THE COUNTRY TO PUT TOGETHER A REMARKABLE CLUTCH OF STORIES ABOUT SOME AMAZING PEOPLE AND PLACES. IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA WE VISIT HISTORIC MACKEROE STATION AND AN EXTRAORDINARY GARDEN CREATED BY PARAPLEGIC DENNIS ROBERTS IN THE ADELAIDE HILLS. IN QUEENSLAND WE HEAD NORTH TO THE ATHERTON TABLELAND AND A WILDLIFE SANCTUARY AND B&B DEVISED BY GERMAN-BORN MARGIT CIANELLI, THEN TO BRISBANE WHERE HOROLOGIST ALAN HAZELTON GIVES US A TOUR OF HIS 500-STRONG CLOCK COLLECTION. THE WEATHER IS GETTING WARMER SO OUR FASHION FEATURE HEADS WATERSIDE AND OUR RECIPES CELEBRATE THE TROPICAL DELIGHTS OF BANANAS. OUR SERVICE FEATURE UNCOVERS THE INFINITE RICHES OF ACCESSORIES FOR THE BEDROOM AND SETTING THE SCENE GOES INTO PARTY MODE WITH LOADS OF INSPIRATION FOR HOSTING A MEXICAN FIESTA. SO JOIN US FOR

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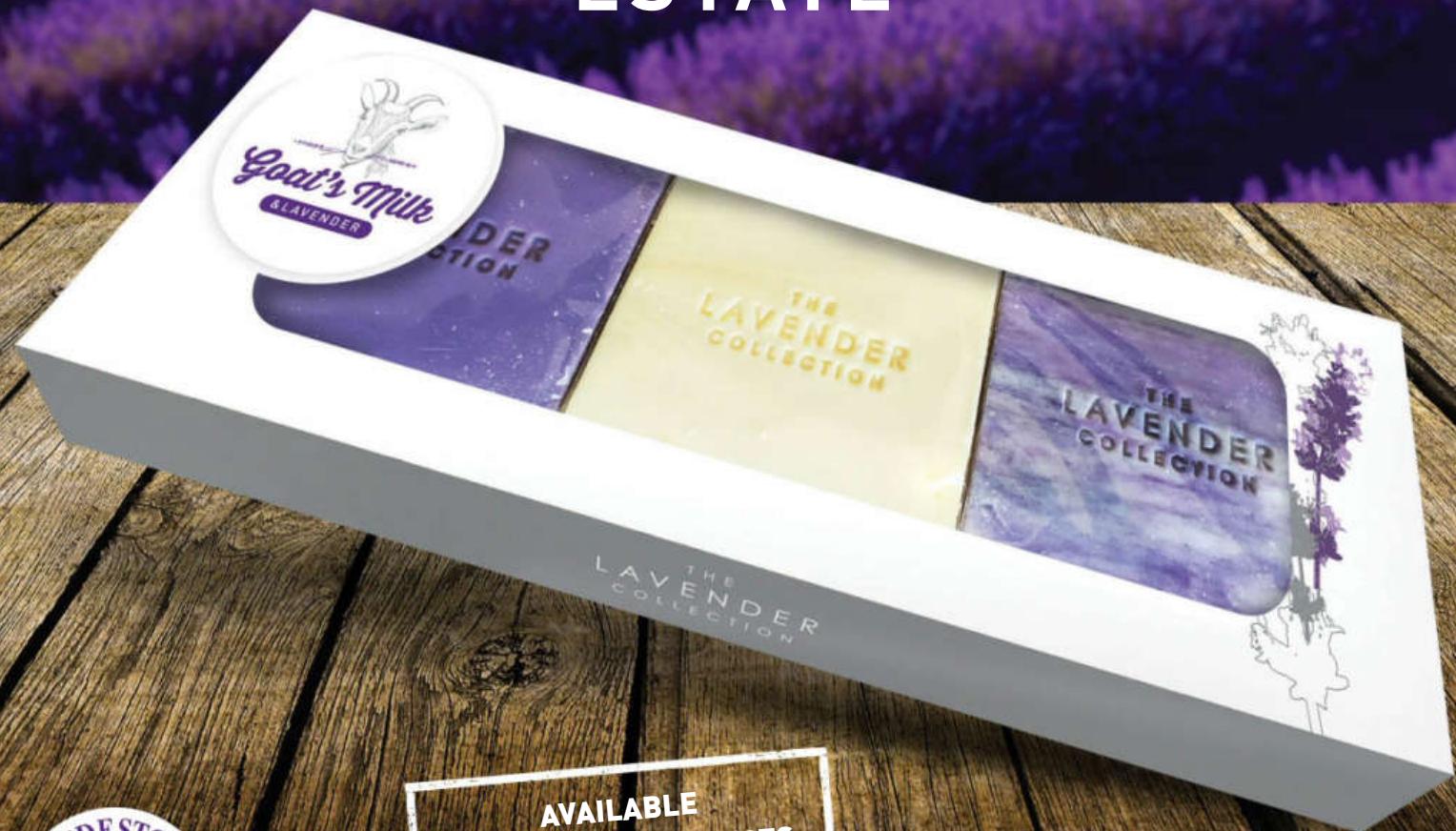
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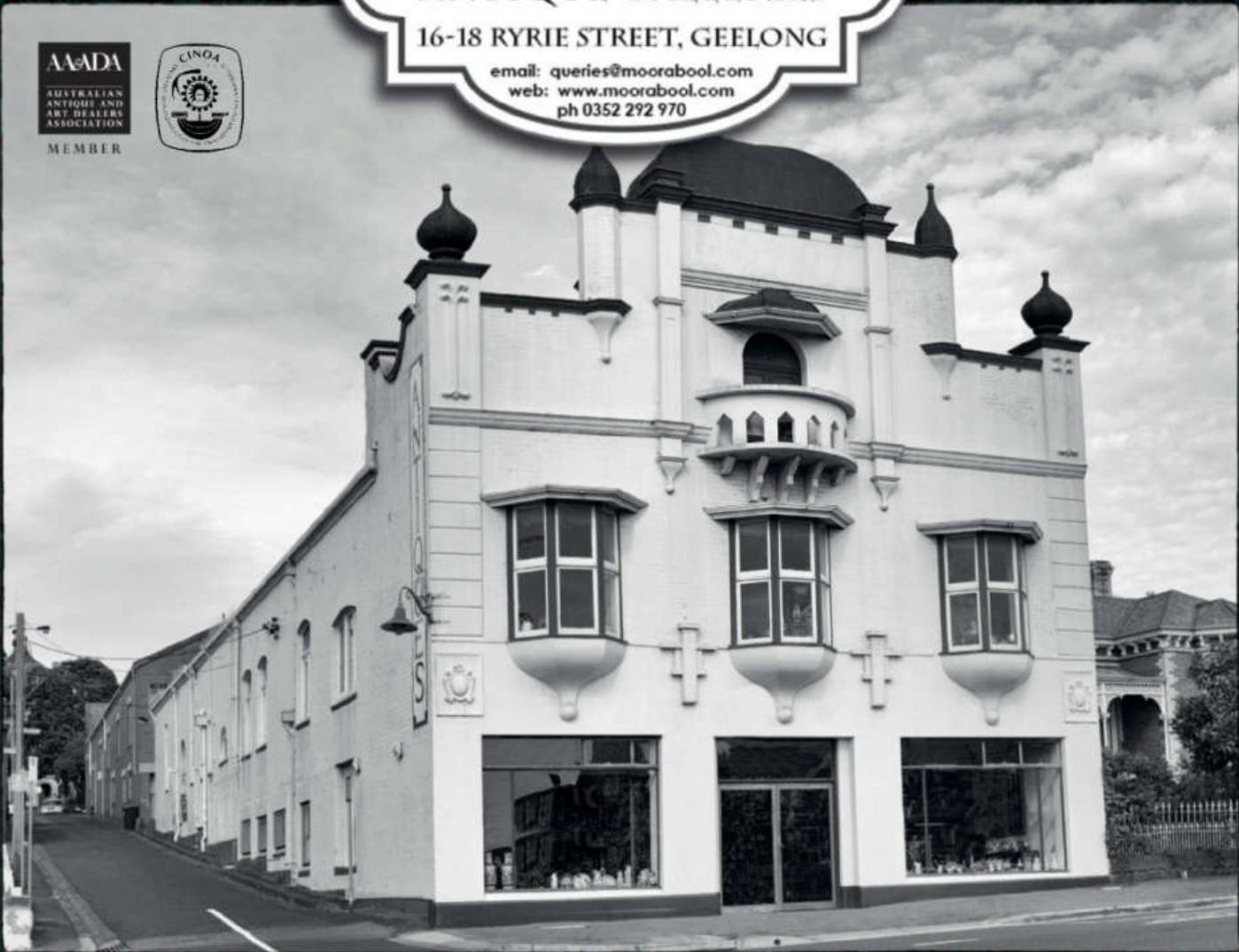
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